

2017 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 23

BY REPRESENTATIVE ANDERS

A RESOLUTION

To express support for the work of the Louisiana office of soil and water conservation in the Department of Agriculture and Forestry.

WHEREAS, the office of soil and water conservation is a major division of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry; and

WHEREAS, the critically important role of the office of soil and water conservation extends back to the creation of the State Soil and Water Conservation Commission by the Legislature of Louisiana in 1938 under Act No. 370, which established the Louisiana Conservation District Program, whose operation has continued through revisions in 1956 and 1985; and

WHEREAS, this role includes collaboration and support for forty-four soil and water conservation districts, which function as unique local units of government to provide conservation services for landowners across the state and work in cooperation with producers and other partner agencies; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana office of soil and water conservation also carries out and collaborates with numerous partners on projects that promote education, outreach, and innovation for agricultural, wetland, and urban conservation and management; and

WHEREAS, since its creation, the Louisiana office of soil and water conservation has also worked in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service to carry out programs and projects under the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act, the National Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act, and the Farm Bill, and worked with farmers and landowners in priority

watersheds across the state in other efforts such as the Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana office of soil and water conservation provides essential services in cooperation with other state agencies, including the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality in conducting the Agricultural Solid Waste Management Program and the Clean Water Act, Section 319 Agricultural Nonpoint Source Management Program; the LSU Agriculture Center in delivering the Certified Prescribed Burn Manager and Master Farmer programs; and with the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority in implementing the Coastal Vegetative Planting Program; and

WHEREAS, many of these conservation programs and projects continue to provide multiple public benefits by improving soil stability and fertility, water quality and quantity, flood control, air quality, and terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitat far beyond the scope and geographic boundaries of the programs and projects implemented; and

WHEREAS, these conservation efforts have historically provided and continue to provide a significant level of socioeconomic stability to many rural areas of the state; and

WHEREAS; ongoing, changing, and intensifying land uses in Louisiana underscore the need to support continuation of efforts by the Louisiana office of soil and water conservation to address persistent soil and water conservation needs in every Louisiana parish and to improve water quality in our state's bayous, lakes, rivers, streams, coastal bays, and estuaries and in the Gulf of Mexico.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana affirms its support for the Louisiana office of soil and water conservation and its continued work to improve the state's agriculture, soil health, water quality, and related natural resources.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the Department of Agriculture and Forestry commissioner, Mike Strain.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES