

2020 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 62

BY REPRESENTATIVE HODGES

FLOODING/CONTROL: Continues the Comite River Diversion Canal Project Task Force

1                                 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2     To continue the Comite River Diversion Canal Project Task Force, which includes the  
3                 Amite River Basin District, and to authorize the task force to study and make  
4                 recommendations on actions necessary to complete construction of the Comite River  
5                 Diversion Project and mitigate flooding caused by the Comite and Amite rivers.

6                 WHEREAS, the Amite River and its tributary, the Comite River, are major causes  
7     of catastrophic flooding in the Greater Baton Rouge Metropolitan Area and all impacted  
8     downstream communities of East Baton Rouge Parish, Livingston Parish, and Ascension  
9     Parish; and

10                WHEREAS, during the floods of 1983 and 2016, substantial portions of the parishes  
11    of East Baton Rouge, Livingston, and Ascension were inundated with flood waters; and

12                WHEREAS, the purpose of the Comite River Diversion Canal Project is to divert  
13    flood waters from the upper Comite River to the Mississippi River; at its maximum capacity,  
14    the project will divert twenty thousand cubic feet per second by gravity flow; and

15                WHEREAS, once completed, the Comite River Diversion Canal could divert fifty  
16    percent of the flood waters from the upper Comite River, which would substantially reduce  
17    flood stages along the lower Comite and Amite rivers; and

18                WHEREAS, following the displacement of thousands of residents from the New  
19    Orleans area after Hurricane Katrina, East Baton Rouge Parish experienced an explosive  
20    population growth and is now the most populous parish in the state, making the Comite  
21    River Diversion Canal Project all the more important and urgently significant.

1           THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby  
2 continue the Comite River Diversion Canal Project Task Force, which includes the Amite  
3 River Basin District, and authorizes the task force to meet and make recommendations to the  
4 legislature and the appropriate state and federal agencies on actions necessary to complete  
5 the construction and maintenance of the Comite River Diversion Canal Project, including  
6 strategies to comply with mitigation requirements and right-of-way acquisitions, mitigation  
7 of flooding caused by the Comite River, other required mitigation projects and flood plain  
8 planning throughout the Amite River Basin, and the actions of the watershed initiative  
9 pertaining to the Amite River Basin to maintain transparency to the citizens of the Amite  
10 River Basin.

11           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall be comprised of the  
12 following members:

13           (1)     One member shall be the member of the House of Representatives appointed  
14 by the speaker of the House whose district is directly impacted by the Amite River Basin and  
15 who shall be the chairman of the task force.

16           (2)     Two members shall be members of the House of Representatives appointed  
17 by the speaker of the House whose districts are directly impacted by the Amite River Basin.

18           (3)     One member shall be the member of the Senate appointed by the president  
19 of the Senate whose district is directly impacted by the Amite River Basin and who shall be  
20 the vice chairman of the task force.

21           (4)     Two members shall be members of the Senate appointed by the president  
22 of the Senate whose districts are directly impacted by the Amite River Basin.

23           (5)     One member shall be appointed by the members of the Louisiana  
24 congressional delegation representing the district in which the Amite River Basin is located.

25           (6)     One member shall be the general counsel of The Water Institute of the Gulf,  
26 or his designee.

27           (7)     One member shall be the secretary of the Department of Transportation and  
28 Development, or his designee.

29           (8)     One member shall be the executive director of the Coastal Protection and  
30 Restoration Authority, or his designee.

1           (9)     One member shall be a former member of the Amite River Basin Drainage  
2 and Water Conservation District board of commissioners appointed by the chairman of the  
3 task force.

4           (10)    One member shall be a representative from the Louisiana Geological Survey.

5           (11)    One member shall be the director of the Department of Public Works of East  
6 Baton Rouge Parish, or his designee.

7           (12)    One member shall be a home builder within the area impacted by the Amite  
8 River Basin District appointed by the president of the Louisiana Home Builders Association.

9           (13)    One member shall be a realtor in the area impacted by the Amite River Basin  
10 District appointed by the Louisiana REALTORS.

11          (14)    One member shall be a representative of the Federal Emergency Management  
12 Agency (FEMA) appointed by the director of FEMA's Louisiana Recovery Office.

13          (15)    One member shall be a landowner in the area impacted by the Amite River  
14 Basin District appointed by the Louisiana Landowners Association, Inc.

15          (16)    One member shall be a representative of the board of commissioners for the  
16 Amite River Basin Drainage and Water Conservation District appointed by the president of  
17 the board.

18           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall submit recommendations to  
19 the Joint Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works no later than December  
20 31, 2020.

21           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this task force will be staffed by the House  
22 Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works staff for all meetings of the task  
23 force.

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DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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Continues the Comite River Diversion Canal Project Task Force, which includes the Amite River Basin District, and authorizes the task force to study and make recommendations to the legislature on actions necessary to complete the construction of the Comite River Diversion Canal Project and mitigate flooding caused by the Comite and Amite rivers.

Provides that the task force submit recommendations to the joint transportation committees by Dec. 31, 2020. Provides that the task force will be staffed by the staff of the House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works. Provides that the task force be composed of the following members:

- (1) One member of the House of Representatives appointed by the speaker of the House whose district is directly impacted by the Amite River Basin and who shall be the chairman of the task force.
- (2) Two members of the House of Representatives appointed by the speaker of the House whose districts are directly impacted by the Amite River Basin.
- (3) One member of the Senate appointed by the president of the Senate whose district is directly impacted by the Amite River Basin and who shall be the vice chairman of the task force.
- (4) Two members of the Senate appointed by the president of the Senate whose districts are directly impacted by the Amite River Basin.
- (5) One member appointed by the members of the La. congressional delegation representing the district in which the Amite River Basin is located.
- (6) The general counsel of The Water Institute of the Gulf, or his designee.
- (7) The secretary of the Dept. of Transportation and Development, or his designee.
- (8) The executive director of the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, or his designee.
- (9) A former member of the Amite River Basin Drainage and Water Conservation District board of commissioners appointed by the chairman of the task force.
- (10) A representative from the La. Geological Survey.
- (11) The director of the Dept. of Public Works of East Baton Rouge Parish, or his designee.
- (12) A home builder within the area impacted by the Amite River Basin District appointed by the president of the La. Home Builders Assoc.
- (13) A realtor in the area impacted by the Amite River Basin District appointed by the La. REALTORS.
- (14) A representative of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) appointed by the director of FEMA's La. Recovery Office.
- (15) A landowner in the area impacted by the Amite River Basin District appointed by the La. Landowners Assoc.
- (16) A representative of the board of commissioners for the Amite River Basin Drainage and Water Conservation District appointed by the president of the board.

#### Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment to the original bill:

1. Add a representative of the board of commissioners for the Amite River Basin Drainage and Water Conservation District appointed by the president of the board to the membership of the task force.