HLS 21RS-318 ORIGINAL

2021 Regular Session

1

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO.26

BY REPRESENTATIVE COUSSAN

COASTAL RESOURCES: Urges and requests the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to conduct a study to determine the final destination of oyster shells removed from Louisiana waters

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2	To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) to conduct
3	a study to determine the final destination of oyster shells removed from Louisiana
4	waters and submit a written report of its findings to the House Committee on Natural
5	Resources and Environment not later than January 5, 2022.
6	WHEREAS, oysters contribute to healthy estuarine ecosystems by providing habitat
7	for a variety of commercially and ecologically important species; and
8	WHEREAS, oysters are a valuable commodity owned by the state of Louisiana on
9	its leased water bottom and public oyster seed grounds throughout the coastal area; and
10	WHEREAS, Louisiana oysters are a commercially valuable species that have an
11	economic impact of more than three hundred million dollars annually; and
12	WHEREAS, oyster reefs protect the coast against storm surge while simultaneously
13	reducing coastal erosion; and
14	WHEREAS, natural oyster reefs in the Northern Gulf of Mexico have steeply
15	declined from historic levels by fifty to eighty-five percent and are further threatened by
16	climate change impacts and changing conditions in the ecosystem including changes in
17	salinity, land loss, flooding events, hurricanes, and storm events; and
18	WHEREAS, the oyster population and their harvest is recognized as culturally,
19	economically, and environmentally valuable by ongoing work by the Louisiana Trustee

1	Implementation Group, the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration (RESTORE) Council and the
2	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; and
3	WHEREAS, oyster reefs, as shoreline protections, are recognized as an important
4	method of restoration and protection against land loss as identified in the Louisiana Coastal
5	Protection and Restoration Authority Coastal Master Plan and the LDWF Oyster
6	Management Plan; and
7	WHEREAS, the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana's (CRCL) Oyster Shell
8	Recycling Program has prevented nearly ten million pounds of shell from entering landfills
9	through recycling shell from New Orleans metro area restaurants since 2014; and
10	WHEREAS, recycled shell collected from shucking houses and restaurants is
11	currently being used by the CRCL, the LDWF, and oyster farmers to rebuild oyster reefs for
12	protection, habitat improvements, and harvest-related activities; and
13	WHEREAS, oyster shells are a valuable commodity owned by the state of Louisiana
14	that should not be wasted; and
15	WHEREAS, oyster shell is a superior substrate for use in remote setting, clutching,
16	and reef restoration activities; and
17	WHEREAS, oyster shell is also a valuable substrate for projects to build coastal
18	resilience; and
19	WHEREAS, a study to determine how much shell is diverted to landfills or
20	transported out of state has not been conducted in the past sixteen years.
21	THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
22	urge and request the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to conduct a study to
23	determine how many oyster shells are recycled or reused, transported out of state, or go into
24	Louisiana landfills.
25	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study shall determine what steps the agency
26	recommends to further divert shells from landfills and into Louisiana waters to benefit the
27	coastal ecosystem, coastal restoration, and protection, and to encourage oyster reef
28	propagation.
29	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and
30	Fisheries shall submit a written report of its findings to the House Committee on Natural

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1 Resources and Environment and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources not later than

- 2 January 5, 2022.
- 3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
- 4 secretary of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

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)]

HCR 26 Original

2021 Regular Session

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Urges and requests the Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries to conduct a study to determine the final destination of oyster shells removed from La. waters and submit a written report of its findings to the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources not later than Jan. 5, 2022.