

2021 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 55

BY REPRESENTATIVE ZERINGUE

CONSERVATION: Creates the Outdoor Conservation Study Group to study conservation funding mechanisms and programs

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To create the Outdoor Conservation Study Group, to study and make recommendations
3 regarding conservation funding mechanisms as well as conservation programs that
4 could be generated from such funding.

5 WHEREAS, Louisiana is blessed with abundant fish and wildlife species and
6 globally important lands and waters which provide important habitats, improve the quality
7 of drinking water, and support commercial and recreational activities; and

8 WHEREAS, Louisiana's agricultural industry includes working lands and forests that
9 are essential to sustainable habitats and economic productivity; and

10 WHEREAS, Louisiana is known as "Sportsman's Paradise" because its lands and
11 waters offer exceptional opportunities for both commercial and recreational activities that
12 inject billions of dollars into our economy annually; and

13 WHEREAS, during the COVID-19 pandemic, visitation to outdoor areas increased
14 dramatically and the mental and physical health benefits of access to such areas have been
15 documented; and

16 WHEREAS, conservation and preservation of these important lands and waters will
17 ensure that the value they provide is available to future generations; and

18 WHEREAS, many of Louisiana's important habitats are diminishing with inadequate
19 funding and resources to conserve them; and

1 WHEREAS, many of our neighboring states have increased investments in
2 conservation funding in order to leverage other funding opportunities for important habitats
3 in their state; and

4 WHEREAS, Louisiana is missing opportunities for matching funds available through
5 public and private sources that could be used to conserve important lands and waters in
6 urban and rural areas throughout our state; and

7 WHEREAS, many states in the Southeast region have determined that establishing
8 a dedicated source of conservation funding has allowed them to greatly leverage their
9 investment in conserving important habitats and thirty-eight states have similarly dedicated
10 funding; and

11 WHEREAS, states have utilized different mechanisms to increase investments in
12 conservation funding, resulting in both conservation of important habitats as well as
13 increasing revenues to the state's economy; and

14 WHEREAS, the identification of financial opportunities and structures that would
15 provide sustained funding for enhanced conservation efforts is critical to the preservation
16 of fish and wildlife species and habitats, the improvement of drinking water, and the
17 continued support of commercial and recreational outdoor activities; and

18 WHEREAS, establishing dedicated sources of funding and investment mechanisms
19 based on a comprehensive study of potential solutions could generate tens of millions of
20 dollars for conservation in Louisiana.

21 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
22 create the Outdoor Conservation Study Group, whose duties shall be to study and make
23 recommendations regarding conservation funding and provides that, at a minimum, the study
24 shall include the following:

25 (1) Potential mechanisms to increase conservation funding for the state of Louisiana.

26 (2) Potential programs for which such funds could serve as match.

27 (3) The purpose for which the conservation funds may be used.

28 (4) An administrative structure for the funds, including criteria for project selection
29 and method of disbursement.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study group shall be composed of the
2 following members:

3 (1) The governor or his designee.

4 (2) The executive assistant for the Governor's Office of Coastal Activities or his
5 designee.

6 (3) The commissioner of administration or his designee.

7 (4) The secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries or his designee.

8 (5) The secretary of the Department of Natural Resources or his designee.

9 (6) The commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry or his designee.

10 (7) The lieutenant governor or his designee.

11 (8) One member appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives.

12 (9) One member appointed by the president of the Senate.

13 (10) The chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment
14 or his designee.

15 (11) The chairman of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources or his designee.

16 (12) Three members selected by the governor from nonprofit conservation
17 organizations having offices in Louisiana and engaged in conservation efforts in the state.

18 (13) One member from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

19 (14) One member from the United States Department of Agriculture, Natural
20 Resource Conservation Service.

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members from the United States Fish and
22 Wildlife Service and the United State Department of Agriculture shall be nonvoting
23 members.

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study group shall submit a report with its
25 recommendations to the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment and the
26 Senate Committee on Natural Resources by February 1, 2022.

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
28 governor of the state of Louisiana, the executive assistant for the Governor's Office of
29 Coastal Activities, the commissioner of administration, the secretary of the Department of
30 Wildlife and Fisheries, the secretary of the Department of Natural Resources, the

1 commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, the lieutenant governor, the
2 principal deputy director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the acting chief
3 of the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

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 55 Original

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Zeringue

Creates the Outdoor Conservation Study Group to study and make recommendations regarding conservation funding mechanisms as well as conservation programs that could be generated from such funding.

Provides for the following members:

- (1) The governor or his designee.
- (2) The executive assistant for the Governor's Office of Coastal Activities or his designee.
- (3) The commissioner of administration or his designee.
- (4) The secretary of the Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries or his designee.
- (5) The secretary of the Dept. of Natural Resources or his designee.
- (6) The commissioner of the Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry or his designee.
- (7) The lieutenant governor or his designee.
- (8) One member appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives.
- (9) One member appointed by the president of the Senate.
- (10) The chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment or his designee.
- (11) The chairman of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources or his designee.
- (12) Three members selected by the governor from nonprofit conservation organizations having offices in La. and engaged in conservation efforts in the state.
- (13) One member from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- (14) One member from the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service.

Provides that the members from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture are nonvoting members.

Provides for the submission of a report to the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources by Feb. 1, 2022.