

2021 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 77

BY REPRESENTATIVE CARPENTER

EMPLOYMENT/WAGES-MINIMUM: Creates a task force to study minimum wage

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To create a task force to study the feasibility of increasing the minimum wage rate and to
3 submit a written report of the task force's findings and recommendations to the
4 Legislature of Louisiana not later than thirty days prior to the convening of the 2022
5 Regular Session.

6 WHEREAS, the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 was passed by Congress and
7 subsequently signed into law on June 25, 1938 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt; and

8 WHEREAS, through the Fair Labor Standards Act, the federal government
9 established and set a minimum hourly wage that still applies today to all United States
10 workers who are employed by companies with revenues of at least five hundred thousand
11 dollars, including workers in hospitals, nursing homes, schools, government agencies, and
12 those who are involved in interstate commerce; and

13 WHEREAS, not only did the Fair Labor Standards Act establish a minimum hourly
14 wage, but it also addressed and established overtime pay, recordkeeping, and child labor
15 standards affecting both full-time and part-time workers in the private sector and in federal,
16 state, and local governments; and

17 WHEREAS, despite these historical feats, one area of the Fair Labor Standards Act
18 that receives plenty of polarizing discussion is the minimum wage rate, and more
19 specifically the increase of minimum wage; and

1 WHEREAS, since the first federal minimum wage rate was set in 1938, it has been
2 raised only twenty-two times; and the last time the minimum wage rate was raised was on
3 July 24, 2009, when it rose from six dollars and fifty-five cents per hour to seven dollars and
4 twenty-five cents per hour; and

5 WHEREAS, states are not required to create minimum wage laws and if a state does
6 not have a set minimum wage rate then the federal minimum wage rate of seven dollars and
7 twenty-five cents per hour will apply; and

8 WHEREAS, when states have created minimum wage laws that are lower than the
9 federal minimum wage then the federal minimum wage rate will apply for workers covered
10 under the Fair Labor Standards Act; however, if a state's minimum wage rate is higher than
11 the federal minimum wage rate then the state's higher minimum wage rate will apply; and

12 WHEREAS, Louisiana is one of those states that currently does not have any
13 minimum wage rate laws, and therefore the current federal minimum wage rate of seven
14 dollars and twenty-five cents per hour applies in this state; and

15 WHEREAS, there have been discussions in Washington, D.C. about potentially
16 increasing the minimum wage rate to fifteen dollars per hour gradually by 2025; and

17 WHEREAS, if this comes to fruition, Louisiana would not need to act on a state level
18 and create minimum wage laws increasing the rate; however, with uncertainty at the federal
19 level, the state must take action by at least studying the feasibility of increasing the
20 minimum wage rate statewide; and

21 WHEREAS, one of the arguments for increasing the minimum wage rate is that the
22 cost of living has continuously increased while the minimum wage rate has remained the
23 same since 2009; and

24 WHEREAS, some proponents of a minimum wage increase have argued that
25 individuals who earn higher wages have a lesser need to rely on state and federal
26 government expenditures, which would result in projected reductions in these expenditures;
27 and

28 WHEREAS, proponents have also argued that an increase in wages is beneficial to
29 both companies and employees because higher wages would improve employee morale,
30 which in turn would increase employee retention and reduce hiring and training costs; and

1 WHEREAS, some opponents of a minimum wage increase have argued that
2 increasing minimum wage would force business owners, who would be unable to afford an
3 increased rate, to lay off employees, thus subsequently raising unemployment rates; and

4 WHEREAS, opponents have also argued that increasing minimum wage would
5 increase the price of consumer goods; and

6 WHEREAS, all of these varying viewpoints, and more, need to be studied and
7 considered in order to determine if it is feasible to raise the minimum wage rate in this state.

8 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
9 establish the Minimum Wage Task Force to study the feasibility of increasing the minimum
10 wage rate in the state and to submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to
11 the Legislature of Louisiana not later than thirty days prior to the convening of the 2022
12 Regular Session.

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the membership of the task force shall be as
14 follows:

- 15 (1) The secretary of the Louisiana Economic Development or his designee.
- 16 (2) The secretary of the Louisiana Workforce Commission or his designee.
- 17 (3) One representative from the Louisiana American Federation of Labor and
18 Congress of Industrial Organizations.
- 19 (4) One representative from the Louisiana Budget Project.
- 20 (5) One representative from the Workplace Justice Project.
- 21 (6) One representative from the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry.
- 22 (7) One representative from the National Federation of Independent Business.
- 23 (8) One representative from the Louisiana Women Lead.
- 24 (9) One representative from the Louisiana Community and Technical College
25 System.

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Workforce Commission shall
27 provide staff support as needed by the task force.

28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall convene its first meeting by
29 September 1, 2021, and shall meet as frequently as it deems necessary for the timely
30 performance of its duties.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall study and make
2 recommendations on matters that include but are not limited to the following:

- 3 (1) The advantages and disadvantages of increasing the minimum wage rate.
4 (2) Mechanisms or measures to increase the minimum wage rate.
5 (3) What other states, preferably neighboring states, if any, have done to increase
6 their own minimum wage rate?
7 (4) What the federal government is doing, if anything, to increase the federal
8 minimum wage rate?
9 (5) The statistical impact of other states increasing their minimum wage rate and
10 the effect on businesses and employees in the state and the state's economy.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to
12 secretary of the Louisiana Economic Development, the secretary of the Louisiana Workforce
13 Commission, the president of the Louisiana American Federation of Labor and Congress of
14 Industrial Organizations, the executive director of the Louisiana Budget Project, the director
15 of the Workplace Justice Project, the president of the Louisiana Association of Business and
16 Industry, the Louisiana state director of the National Federation of Independent Business,
17 the executive director of the Louisiana Women Lead, and the president of the Louisiana
18 Community and Technical College System.

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 77 Engrossed

2021 Regular Session

Carpenter

Creates the Minimum Wage Task Force to study the feasibility of increasing the minimum wage rate and report its findings and recommendations to the Legislature of La. not later than 30 days prior to the convening of the 2022 R.S.

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Labor and Industrial Relations to the original bill:

1. Make technical changes.