

2021 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 48

BY REPRESENTATIVE ZERINGUE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request continued support for the efforts by the state of Louisiana and other states in the Mississippi River Basin to work together toward achieving the goals of the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan and a reduction of the hypoxic zone off the coast of Louisiana.

WHEREAS, the continued formation of a large area of hypoxia, or low oxygen levels, in Louisiana's coastal waters remains a threat to the health of productive commercial and recreational offshore fisheries and the seafood industry in the state; and

WHEREAS, the state of Louisiana has been an active participant in the cooperative effort to address this problem through the federal-state Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Watershed Nutrient Task Force since 1997, and the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan for reducing hypoxia in the Northern Gulf of Mexico since 2000; and

WHEREAS, this endeavor has included cooperation and engagement from twelve states along the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, along with federal agencies, industries, and private stakeholders, in a collaborative effort to reduce the average size of the annual hypoxic zone through conservation, ecosystem restoration, and nutrient management and reduction programs; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana and the task force are working with partners such as the twelve land-grant universities in states along the Mississippi River, including Louisiana State University and its LSU AgCenter and the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF), office of soil and water conservation, in collaboration with the United States Department of Agriculture, farmers, and producers to implement programs contained in the 2018 Farm Bill, including projects in Louisiana's priority watersheds that drain to the Mississippi River, the Atchafalaya River, and the Gulf of Mexico; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality is working with the LDAF, other partner agencies, and stakeholders to reduce nutrient loading in priority watersheds throughout the state through the state's nonpoint source pollution program, as well as working with industries along the Mississippi River industrial corridor between Baton Rouge and New Orleans to proactively and voluntarily reduce their nutrient releases into the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico through the Louisiana Environmental Leadership Program; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Legislature has previously expressed its support for efforts to reduce the Gulf hypoxic zone and ensure the health of the state's offshore fisheries and waters, in resolutions such as House Concurrent Resolution No. 47 of the 2000 Regular Session, House Concurrent Resolution No. 80 of the 2007 Regular Session, Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 40 of the 2010 Regular Session, Senate Resolution No. 84 of the 2012 Regular Session, House Concurrent Resolution No. 70 of the 2016 Regular Session, and House Concurrent Resolution No. 30 of the 2019 Regular Session.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Louisiana Legislature reaffirms this support and urges and requests continued support for these efforts by our state and others in the Mississippi River Basin to work together toward achieving the goals and targets of the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan and a reduction of the hypoxic zone off our coast.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to Governor John Bel Edwards, Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser, and each member of the Louisiana congressional delegation.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE