

2023 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 134

BY REPRESENTATIVE KERNER

SEAFOOD: Creates the Imported Seafood Safety Task Force to study and make recommendations regarding the funding and enforcement of imported seafood regulations

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To create the Imported Seafood Safety Task Force to study and make recommendations

3 regarding funding for imported seafood testing and enforcement mechanisms

4 required for the Louisiana Department of Health to effectively protect Louisiana

5 consumers.

6 WHEREAS, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in

7 2019 the United States imported six billion pounds of edible seafood products; and

8 WHEREAS, it is estimated that over half of the imported seafood consumed in the

9 United States is from aquaculture rather than wild-caught; and

10 WHEREAS, only a very small amount of imported seafood is tested for harmful

11 substances by the federal government; and

12 WHEREAS, the Louisiana State University School of Renewable Natural Resources

13 published a 2020 paper titled "Determination of Sulfite and Antimicrobial Residue in

14 Imported Shrimp to the USA", which presented findings from a study of imported shrimp

15 purchased from retail stores in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; and

16 WHEREAS, a screening of these shrimp for sulfites and residues from antimicrobial

17 drugs found the following: (1) five percent of the shrimp contained malachite green, (2)

18 seven percent contained oxytetracycline, (3) seventeen percent contained fluoroquinolone,

19 and (4) seventy percent contained nitrofurantoin; and

1           WHEREAS, all of these substances have been banned by the United States Food and  
2 Drug Administration (FDA) in domestic aquaculture operations; and

3           WHEREAS, although the FDA requires that food products exposed to sulfites must  
4 include a label with a statement about the presence of sulfites, of the forty-three percent of  
5 these locally purchased shrimp found to contain sulfites, not one package complied with this  
6 labeling requirement; and

7           WHEREAS, the drug and sulfite residues included in this screening can be harmful  
8 to human health during both handling and consumption and have been known to cause all  
9 of the following: liver damage and tumors, reproductive abnormalities, cardiac arrhythmia,  
10 renal failure, hemolysis, asthma attacks, and allergic reactions; and

11           WHEREAS, the results of this study confirm that existing screening and enforcement  
12 measures for imported seafood are insufficient; whatever the percentage of imports inspected  
13 may be, seafood is currently being imported that contains unsafe substances that put  
14 Louisiana consumers at risk; and

15           WHEREAS, in order to protect the health and safety of Louisiana consumers, the  
16 Louisiana Department of Health is statutorily authorized to sample and test imported  
17 seafood; and

18           WHEREAS, current law requires commercial seafood permit holders that import  
19 seafood to pay a nominal annual "seafood safety fee" of one hundred dollars; and

20           WHEREAS, the department requires increased funding in order to cover the costs  
21 of the tests and increase the frequency of testing.

22           THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby  
23 establish the Imported Seafood Safety Task Force to study and make recommendations  
24 regarding funding for the testing of imported seafood, what a fair fee would be for  
25 commercial distributors of imported seafood in Louisiana, and what enforcement  
26 mechanisms should be in place for the Louisiana Department of Health to be able to  
27 effectively carry out its mandate.

28           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Imported Seafood Safety Task Force shall  
29 be composed of the following members:

30           (1) The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health or his designee.

1 (2) The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries or his  
2 designee.

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

4 (4) One member appointed by the president of the Senate.

5 (5) A representative of commercial fisherman, appointed by the secretary of the  
6 Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

7 (6) One member appointed by the Shrimp Task Force.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall submit a detailed written  
9 report of its findings to the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and the House  
10 Committee on Natural Resources and Environment prior to the 2024 Regular Session of the  
11 Legislature.

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the  
13 secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health, the secretary of the Louisiana Department  
14 of Wildlife and Fisheries, and the Shrimp Task Force.

---

#### 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 134 Original

2023 Regular Session

Kerner

Creates the Imported Seafood Safety Task Force to study and make recommendations to the Legislature regarding who should pay for the cost of testing imported seafood, what a fair fee would be for commercial distributors of imported seafood in Louisiana, and what enforcement mechanisms should be in place for the Louisiana Department of Health to be able to effectively carry out its mandate.

Provides that the Imported Seafood Safety Task Force shall be composed of the following members:

- (1) The secretary of the La. Dept. of Health or his designee.
- (2) The secretary of the La. Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries or his designee.
- (3) One member appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives.
- (4) One member appointed by the president of the Senate.
- (5) A representative of commercial fisherman, appointed by the secretary of the Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries.
- (6) A representative of the Shrimp Task Force.

Requires a written report be submitted by the task force to the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment prior to the 2024 R.S.