

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 544

BY REPRESENTATIVE BOYD

TRANSPORTATION: Provides relative to the Regional Transit Authority

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 48:1655(A)(1)(introductory paragraph) and (2) and 1656(8) and
3 (23) and to enact R.S. 48:1656(24) through (27), relative to the Regional Transit
4 Authority Board of commissioners requirements; to provide for certain powers and
5 authority; to provide for penalties; and to provide for related matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 48:1655(A)(1)(introductory paragraph) and (2) and 1656(8) and (23)
8 are hereby amended and reenacted and R.S. 48:1656(24) through (27) are hereby enacted
9 to read as follows:

10 §1655. Board of commissioners; membership; terms

11 A.(1) The board of commissioners of the authority shall be composed of
12 three members from each participating parish appointed by the chief executive
13 officer of that parish, subject to the approval of its ~~governing authority~~ city council,
14 and two members appointed by the chief executive officer of the parish with the
15 greatest percentage of public transit revenue operating miles from recommendations
16 of the legislative delegation of that parish as follows:

17 * * *

18 (2) Each member appointed by the chief executive officer of a parish shall
19 be domiciled within the parish. Further, each member appointed to the authority by
20 the council or parish legislator shall possess the minimum transit expertise standards

1 and required training. The transit minimum standards shall be established by the
2 board commissioners by January 1, 2025 and shall then apply to all newly appointed
3 commissioners. The city council has the ability to confirm and recall board
4 members.

5 * * *

6 §1656. General powers

7 The authority shall have all powers necessary or convenient to accomplish
8 the aforesaid purposes, including but not limited to the following:

9 * * *

10 (8) The power to make and execute all contracts and other instruments
11 necessary or convenient to the exercise of the powers of the authority, including the
12 power to contract for managerial and operating services, provided that management
13 and labor attempt to resolve all contracts bilaterally before involving a mediator.

14 * * *

15 (23) The power to require quarterly reporting of the Regional Transit
16 Authority funds and functioning.

17 (24) The power to establish and address situations where the Regional
18 Transit Authority violates state and city laws and establish penalties.

19 (25) The power to establish an investigative committee for the following:
20 probe waste, bid rigging, abuse of employees, and labor law violations.

21 (26) The power to require the Regional Transit Authority Board of
22 Commissioners to include at least one designated representative from the authority's
23 non-management labor force.

24 (27) Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law to the contrary,
25 including the provisions of R.S. 45:161 et seq., the authority created herein and any
26 entity contracted to manage or operate the authority shall not be deemed a "person"
27 as defined in R.S. 45:162 or a "common carrier" as defined in R.S. 45:162 nor shall
28 the authority or any entity contracted to manage or operate the authority be construed
29 or interpreted to be such. Additionally, the authority and any entity contracted to

1 manage or operate the authority shall not be deemed to be a common carrier, or
 2 interpreted to be such by any court of this state in a suit for personal injury or
 3 property damage.

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)]

HB 544 Original

2024 Regular Session

Boyd

Abstract: Provides for solutions for the Regional Transit Authority.

Present law requires the board of commissioners of the authority be composed of three members from each participating parish appointed by the chief executive officer of that parish, subject to the approval of its governing authority.

Proposed law changes the approval from the governing authority to the city council.

Present law specifies that each member appointed by the chief executive officer of a parish must be domiciled within that parish.

Proposed law adds to present law additional qualifications for the board of commissioners and members. Specifies that each member appointed must possess minimum transit expertise standards and required training. Further specifies the transit minimum standards to be established by Jan. 1, 2025, and will apply to all newly appointed commissioners. Grants the City Council of New Orleans authority to recall and confirm members of the board.

Present law grants authority to make and execute all contracts and other instruments necessary or convenient, including the power to contract for managerial and operating services.

Proposed law makes authority in present law contingent on management and labor attempting to resolve all contracts bilaterally before involving a mediator.

Proposed law specifies that quarterly reporting of the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) funds is required, and establishes penalties for when the RTA breaks city and state laws.

Proposed law provides the power to establish and address situations where the RTA violates state and city laws and establish penalties.

Proposed law creates an investigative committee for probe waste, bid rigging, abuse of employees, and labor law violations.

(Amends R.S. 48:1655(A)(1)(intro. para.) and (2) and 1658(8) and (23); Adds R.S. 48:1656(24)-(27))