

GREEN SHEET REDIGEST

HB 544

2024 Regular Session

Boyd

TRANSPORTATION: Provides relative to the Regional Transit Authority.

DIGEST

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.

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

Proposed law adds provisions for legislative delegation's failure to submit reference list and for parishes to opt out of RTA.

Present law requires that one member be appointed from House District 102 by the state representative representing the district beginning on Sept. 1, 2024, and specifies that the appointment rotates every four years between the members appointed from the house district and a member appointed from Senate District 7 by the state senator representing the district.

Proposed law adds additional qualifications to present law for the board of commissioners and members. Specifies that each member appointed must possess minimum transit expertise standards, the required training, and have previous union experience. Further specifies that the transit minimum standards be established by Jan. 1, 2025, and will apply to all newly appointed commissioners.

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 establishes penalties.

Proposed law gives the authority the power to probe waste, bid rigging, abuse of employees, and labor law violations.

Proposed law creates the Regional Transit Authority Advisory board and provides for its purpose, composition, and powers.

Proposed law specifies that the advisory board is created to assist and advise the RTA and make recommendations to make informed decisions regarding the functions outlined in present law.

Proposed law provides for the advisory board to have full and unrestricted access to all written information, documents, data and power to request reports and other information from the RTA.

Proposed law requires the advisory board to meet quarterly with the board of commissioners.

Proposed law requires the advisory board have two hours of transit specific training.

Proposed law requires the advisory board be composed of eleven persons as follows:

- (1) An employee of the Regional Transit Authority appointed by the chief executive officer.
- (2) A local member of the Amalgamated Transit Union who works for RTA appointed by the president and business agent.
- (3) A member from Ride New Orleans appointed by the executive officer.
- (4) The president of each of the following universities: Loyola University, Tulane University, Xavier University, Dillard University, Southern University at New Orleans, the University of Holy Cross and two members appointed by the president of the Louisiana American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organization.

(Amends R.S. 48:1655(A)(1)(introductory paragraph) and (A)(1)(c), and (2) and 1658(8) and (23); adds R.S. 48:1656(24)-(26) and 1656.1)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works to the original bill:

1. Make technical changes.
2. Revert back to present law by changing the approval authority from the city council to the parish's governing authority.
3. Remove the two members to be appointed from submissions by the parish's legislative delegation.
4. Add two members to the Regional Transit Authority board of commissioners as follows: (a) one member appointed from House District 102 by the state representative who represents the district and (b) one member appointed from Senate District 7 by the state senator who represents the district.
5. Add a requirement that each member appointed to the authority possess previous union experience.
6. Remove a provision that would have required the powers of the Regional Transit Authority board of commissioners to include at least one designated representative from the authority's non-management labor force.

The House Floor Amendments to the engrossed bill:

1. Make technical changes.
2. Add one member to the Regional Transit Authority board of commissioners to be appointed from House District 102 by the state representative representing the district to begin on September 1, 2024, and requires the appointment to rotate every four years between a member appointed from the house district and a member appointed from Senate District 7 by the state senator representing the district.
3. Remove a provision that would have required two members of the Regional Transit Authority board of commissioners as follows: (a) one member appointed from House District 102 by the state representative who represents the district and (b) one member appointed from Senate District 7 by the state senator who represents the district.

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Committee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Transportation, Highways,
and Public Works to the reengrossed bill

1. Authorizes audit of RTA.
2. Makes technical changes.
3. Adds provision to opt out of RTA.
4. Removes voting provision.