
DIGEST

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HB 588 Original

2025 Regular Session

Mena

Abstract: Provides relative to the membership and certain powers of the Regional Transit Authority board of commissioners.

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. Requires the chief executive officer of a parish to appoint a member in the event that the congressmen of a parish's legislative delegation fails to submit a list of names to the chief executive officer of that parish within 30 days of the date on which notice is sent to the congressmen of that parish's legislative delegation. Requires the chief executive officer of that parish to appoint a member. Additionally, requires the mayor or governing authority to appoint two new members if any participating parish opts out of the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) after Aug. 1, 2024.

Proposed law modifies present law by transferring the authority to appoint two new members from the mayor to the chief executive officer of the parish.

Present law requires each member appointed by the chief executive officer of a parish to be domiciled within the parish. Specifies that members appointed to the authority by the parish legislator must possess transit expertise standards and required training and previous union experience. Further requires that the standards be established by the board by Jan. 1, 2025 and apply to all newly appointed commissioners.

Proposed law modifies present law by removing reference to the parish legislator and the requirement for union experience and specifying that the requirement be the completion of at least two hours of transit-specific training before the appointee takes office or no later than one year after office is assumed.

Present law requires the board hold at least one meeting each month. Requires the secretary of the board give written notice and agenda to each board member at least five days before and be informed of any meeting for notice purposes.

Proposed law modifies present law by changing the meeting frequency from at least one meeting per month to at least 10 meetings per year. Further removes the five-day notice requirement from the secretary.

Present law requires a quorum consisting of sufficient members present to constitute two-thirds of

the weighted vote, and at least one representative of a majority of the parishes comprising the authority. Further authorizes the majority present at a meeting to exercise and perform all powers and duties of the board, except as otherwise provided by its bylaws. Additionally, prohibit proxy voting.

Proposed law retains present law and adds a requirement of a simple majority if there is only one parish represented on the board.

Present law provides for the following general powers of the board: to require quarterly reporting of the RTA funds and functioning; to establish and address situations where the RTA violates state and city laws and establish penalties; and to establish an investigative committee for probe waste, bid rigging, abuse of employees, and labor law violations.

Proposed law removes present law.

Present law requires the advisory board to meet quarterly with the board.

Proposed law modifies present law by requiring the meeting time for the advisory board to be at minimum, quarterly. Requires the advisory board to present findings, recommendations, and any other relevant information to the board at least once per year.

Present law requires a composition of the advisory board of at least 12 persons.

Present law requires the membership of the advisory board include a local member of the Amalgamated Transit Union who works for the RTA appointed by the president and business agent.

Proposed law modifies present law by requiring the membership include a labor union representative from either the Amalgamated Transit Union, the International Brotherhood of Electric Workers, or the United Labor Union who works for the RTA. Further requires the nomination and selection be decided by the elected officers of all three unions.

Present law requires the membership of the advisory board also include the presidents of certain La. universities.

Proposed law modifies present law by requiring that each president of the schools appoint a representative to the advisory board. Further adds Delgado Community College to the list of educational institutions.

Present law requires the membership of the advisory board include two members appointed by the president of the La. American Federation of Labor and Congress of La. Industrial Organizations.

Proposed law reduces this membership from two members to one member.

Present law requires appointed members of the advisory board receive at least two hours of transit-specific training and two hours of training on labor and union relations best practices, either

before taking office or no later than one year after the office is assumed. Further requires all training be formally approved by the board and ratified by each participating parish or city legislative body.

Proposed law modifies present law by requiring a commitment to complete at least two hours of transit-specific training either before taking office or no later than one year after the office is assumed. Removes the requirement of training on labor and union relations best practices. Further requires the advisory board establish the transit-specific training minimum standards.

Present law authorizes any city or parish with appointments and representation on the board to audit the authority or hire a third party to perform the audit. Provides that all records and information requested in the audit be provided in an expedited manner by the authority and authorizes a city or parish council to levy fines on the authority.

Proposed law modifies present law by making it an expense of the city or parish when hiring a third party to perform the audit. Further requires that employees working hours dedicated to support the third-party audit be reimbursed to the authority.

(Amends R.S. 48:1655(A)(1)(c)(ii) and (2) and (I)(1) and (2), 1656(23), and 1656.1(B)(3), (C)(2) and (4) and (5), (D), and (E); Repeals R.S. 48:1656(24) - (26))