

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 54

BY REPRESENTATIVES DESHOTEL, EGAN, FISHER, AND JACKSON

WATER/DRINKING WATER: Urges and requests the Louisiana Department of Health to review and revise its regulations regarding minimum chlorine concentration levels in public water systems

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to conduct a comprehensive review
3 to assess the health and environmental impacts of chlorine levels in public water
4 systems.

5 WHEREAS, the Louisiana Department of Health currently mandates that
6 administrators of public water systems in the state add elevated levels of disinfectants, such
7 as chlorine, to drinking water supplies resulting in the formation of potentially harmful
8 chemical byproducts; and

9 WHEREAS, in 2013, in response to public concern about harmful microorganisms
10 in drinking water, the Louisiana Department of Health issued an emergency rule increasing
11 the minimum required chlorine concentration in public water systems to 0.5 parts per
12 million, a level five times higher than the previous legal minimum and more than twice the
13 concentration recommended by the United States Environmental Protection Agency; and

14 WHEREAS, despite the emergency nature of this rule, the Louisiana Department of
15 Health has not revised or reduced the elevated chlorine requirement in over a decade; and

16 WHEREAS, the long-term health impacts of elevated chlorine levels in public water
17 systems remain insufficiently studied, but emerging scientific research suggests that
18 excessive chlorine can contribute to the formation of carcinogenic byproducts known as
19 trihalomethanes (THMs); and

1 WHEREAS, THMs are produced when chlorine interacts with naturally occurring
2 organic matter during the water disinfection process; and

3 WHEREAS, epidemiological studies have linked prolonged exposure to THMs with
4 an increased risk of certain cancers, including bladder cancer; and

5 WHEREAS, the increased use of chlorine, intended to meet regulatory compliance,
6 has resulted in higher concentrations of THMs, which may pose long-term health risks to
7 Louisiana residents; and

8 WHEREAS, in order to meet the statewide minimum chlorine requirement, local
9 water authorities are often forced to increase chlorine levels system-wide, leading to greater
10 THM formation and compounding the potential health hazards; and

11 WHEREAS, there is a distinction between the treatment needs of surface water and
12 ground water such that surface water may need more disinfecting chemicals, such as
13 chlorine, than is required for ground water, which has low amounts of microbes and
14 contaminants; and

15 WHEREAS, in addition to public health concerns, the elevated chlorine requirements
16 place a significant financial burden on small and under-resourced local water systems, many
17 of which already face infrastructure and funding challenges.

18 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
19 urge and request the Louisiana Department of Health to review and revise its regulations
20 regarding minimum chlorine concentration levels in public water systems with the goal of
21 aligning those requirements with current scientific evidence and federal recommendations.

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge
23 and request the Louisiana Department of Health to consult with independent scientists,
24 environmental health experts, and local water authorities in developing updated disinfection
25 guidelines that maintain microbial safety while minimizing adverse health and economic
26 impacts.

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
28 governor, surgeon general of this state, and secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health.

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 54 Engrossed

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Deshotel

Urges and requests the La. Dept. of Health to conduct a comprehensive review to assess the health and environmental impacts of chlorine levels in public water systems.

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Health and Welfare to the original bill:

1. Clarify that disinfection needs may vary based on water type.