
DIGEST

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Leopold

HB No. 913

Abstract: Creates the Louisiana Finfish Task Force in the Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries.

Proposed law, relative to finfish, creates the La. Finfish Task Force within the Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries to consist of the following appointments:

- (1) The governor or his designee.
- (2) Three members appointed by the secretary of the Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries to include a marine biologist, an enforcement agent, and an economist.
- (3) The commissioner of the Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry or his designee.
- (4) The secretary of the Dept. of Health and Hospitals or his designee.
- (5) Three members and three alternate members appointed by the governor each of whom possesses a commercial fisherman's license with a "certified" endorsement, three to be selected from a list of six nominees submitted by the La. Shrimp Association and three to be selected from a list of six nominees submitted by the Delta Commercial Fisheries Association.
- (6) One member appointed by the governor who is an active La. dock buyer of finfish.
- (7) Three members and three alternate members appointed by the governor each of whom possesses recreational freshwater and saltwater fishing licenses, four to be selected from a list of eight nominees submitted by the Coastal Conservation Association of La. and two to be selected from a list of four nominees submitted by BASS Louisiana.

Provides that the appointees representing state government agencies are not voting members and are not counted as part of a quorum. Provides for adoption of bylaws and provides for appointment by the governor of a chairman for the first year. Provides for election of a chairman by the task force thereafter.

Prohibits compensation for appointees but authorizes reimbursement of expenses at the same rate as state employees. Charges the task force with responsibility to coordinate efforts to increase production and marketability; study the decline in finfish marketability; assist in the development of a finfish inspection program and branding program, and make recommendations to the

Wildlife and Fisheries Commission and state departments and agencies for implementation of policies intended to enhance the domestic finfish industry.

Further provides that the task force shall represent the industry before federal and state administrative and legislative bodies and contract for legal services necessary to represent the interests of the finfish industry in judicial, administrative, and legislative proceedings.

(Adds R.S. 36:610(B)(12) and R.S. 56:301.10)