

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE BILL NO. 913

BY REPRESENTATIVES LEOPOLD AND GAROFALO

FISHING/FINFISH: Creates the Louisiana Finfish Task Force

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 36:610(B)(12) and R.S. 56:301.10, relative to commercial and recreational
3 finfish; to create the Louisiana Finfish Task Force; to provide for membership; to
4 provide for powers, duties, and responsibilities; and to provide for related matters.

5 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

6 Section 1. R.S. 36:610(B)(12) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

7 §610. Transfer of agencies and functions to Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

8 * * *

9 B. The following agencies, as defined in R.S. 36:3, are transferred to and
10 hereinafter shall be within the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, as provided in
11 R.S. 36:802.

12 * * *

13 (12) The Louisiana Finfish Task Force (R.S. 56:301.10)

14 * * *

15 Section 2. R.S. 56:301.10 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

16 §301.10. Louisiana Finfish Task Force

17 A. There is hereby established the Louisiana Finfish Task Force to study and
18 monitor the finfish industry and to make recommendations to the Wildlife and
19 Fisheries Commission, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, and other state

1 agencies for the maximization of benefit from that industry for the state of Louisiana
2 and its citizens.

3 B. The task force shall be composed as follows:

4 (1) The governor or his designee.

5 (2) Three members appointed by the secretary of the Department of Wildlife
6 and Fisheries as follows:

7 (a) One member who is a fisheries biologist.

8 (b) One member who is an enforcement agent.

9 (c) One member who is an economist.

10 (3) The commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry or his
11 designee.

12 (4) The secretary of the Department of Health and Hospitals or his designee.

13 (5) Three members and three alternate members appointed by the governor
14 each of whom shall possess a commercial fisherman's license with a "certified"
15 endorsement pursuant to R.S. 56:303(E), with three to be selected from a list of six
16 nominees submitted by the Louisiana Shrimp Association and three to be selected
17 from a list of six nominees submitted by the Delta Commercial Fisheries
18 Association.

19 (6) One member appointed by the governor who is an active Louisiana dock
20 buyer of finfish.

21 (7) Three members and three alternate members appointed by the governor
22 each of whom shall possess recreational freshwater and saltwater fishing licenses,
23 with four to be selected from a list of eight nominees submitted by the Coastal
24 Conservation Association Louisiana and two to be selected from a list of four
25 nominees submitted by the Louisiana Chapter of the Bass Anglers Sportsman
26 Society (B.A.S.S.).

27 C. The members appointed pursuant to the provisions of Paragraphs (B)(1)
28 through (4) of this Section shall be nonvoting members. In addition, they shall not

1 be considered members of the task force for determination of the number of
2 members necessary for a quorum and for establishing the presence of a quorum.

3 D. The task force shall adopt bylaws under which it shall operate, and four
4 voting members of the task force shall constitute a quorum sufficient to conduct
5 meetings and business of the task force. The governor shall appoint the chairman of
6 the task force for a period of one year, and thereafter the task force shall elect a
7 chairman from its membership and may seek and receive assistance from universities
8 within the state in the development of methods to increase production and
9 marketability of finfish. The members of the task force shall serve without
10 compensation; however, the task force may receive the same reimbursement of travel
11 expenses for attending the meetings as is allowed for other state employees' travel.

12 E. The task force is hereby charged with responsibility to do the following:

13 (1) Coordinate efforts to increase finfish production and marketability.

14 (2) Provide for the study of the decline in finfish marketability and market
15 price, provide for the study of the impacts of imported finfish on the domestic
16 market, assist in the development of a state finfish inspection program, assist in the
17 development of a Louisiana finfish certification and branding program, and make
18 recommendations to the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, the Department of
19 Wildlife and Fisheries, the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of
20 Agriculture and Forestry, and the Department of Health and Hospitals for
21 implementation of policies to help enhance the domestic finfish industry.

22 (3) Make recommendations with respect to issues pertaining to the finfish
23 industry and finfish production to the various state agencies charged with
24 responsibility for differing elements of the finfish industry in this state, including the
25 Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the Department of Natural Resources, the
26 Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration, the Department of Health and
27 Hospitals, the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, and the legislature.

28 (4) Develop markets and marketing strategies for the development and
29 expansion of markets for finfish harvested from Louisiana waters.

1 (5) Represent the interests of the Louisiana finfish industry before federal
2 and state administrative and legislative bodies on issues of importance to the
3 Louisiana finfish industry.

4 (6) Contract for legal services to represent the interests of the Louisiana
5 finfish industry in judicial, administrative, and legislative proceedings.

6 (7) Perform any acts deemed necessary and proper to carry out its duties and
7 responsibilities.

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)]

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)