

**ACT No. 208**

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE BILL NO. 913

BY REPRESENTATIVES LEOPOLD AND GAROFALO

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AN ACT

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

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

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

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

\* \* \*

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

\* \* \*

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

\* \* \*

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

§301.10. Louisiana Finfish Task Force

A. There is hereby established the Louisiana Finfish Task Force to study and monitor the finfish industry and to make recommendations to the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, and other state agencies for the maximization of benefit from that industry for the state of Louisiana and its citizens.

B. The task force shall be composed as follows:

(1) The governor or his designee.

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

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

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

5                   (c) One member who is an economist.

6                   (3) The commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry or his  
 7                   designee.

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

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

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

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

23                   (8) One member of the Senate appointed by the president of the Senate.

24                   (9) One member of the House of Representatives appointed by the speaker  
 25                   of the House of Representatives.

26                   C. The members appointed pursuant to the provisions of Paragraphs (B)(1)  
 27                   through (4) of this Section shall be nonvoting members. In addition, they shall not  
 28                   be considered members of the task force for determination of the number of  
 29                   members necessary for a quorum and for establishing the presence of a quorum.

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

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

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

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

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

29           (4) Develop markets and marketing strategies for the development and  
30           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.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_