

SENATE BILL NO. 170

BY SENATORS THOMPSON, ALARIO, ALLAIN, APPEL, BARROW, BOUDREAUX, CARTER, COLOMB, CORTEZ, ERDEY, FANNIN, GATTI, HENSGENS, JOHNS, LONG, LUNEAU, MARTINY, MILLS, MORRELL, PEACOCK, PRICE, RISER, WALSWORTH AND WARD

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

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AN ACT

To enact R.S. 36:4(BB) and Part VII of Chapter 2 of Title 49 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 49:220.31 through 220.33, relative to rural water systems; to create the Rural Water Infrastructure Committee within the office of the governor; to provide for membership of the committee; to provide relative to terms, quorum requirements, and per diem; to provide for the functions of the committee; to require the committee to make recommendations; and to provide for related matters.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 36:4(BB) is hereby enacted to read as follows:

§4. Structure of executive branch of state government

* * *

BB. The Rural Water Infrastructure Committee (R.S. 49:220.31 et seq.) is hereby placed within the office of the governor and shall perform its powers, duties, and functions as provided by law.

Section 2. Part VII of Chapter 2 of Title 49 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, comprised of R.S. 49:220.31 through 220.33, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

PART VII. RURAL WATER INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

§220.31. Purpose

The state of Louisiana recognizes the need to develop and implement a comprehensive rural water infrastructure plan to address deteriorating public water supply systems and protect the interests, health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Louisiana. This effort will require the cooperation and participation

1 of numerous federal, state, and local agencies. To further the development of the
2 plan, the state of Louisiana recognizes the necessity to establish the Rural Water
3 Infrastructure Committee for the purpose of providing advice and guidance to
4 the governor on all matters relative to rural water systems in Louisiana.

5 §220.32. Rural Water Infrastructure Committee; creation and organization

6 A. The Rural Water Infrastructure Committee is hereby created within
7 the office of the governor and shall be composed of seventeen members as
8 follows:

9 (1) The State Director of United States Department of Agriculture Rural
10 Development in Louisiana or his designee.

11 (2) The State Director of the United States Economic Development
12 Administration or his designee.

13 (3) The governor or his designee.

14 (4) The governor's designee to the Delta Regional Authority.

15 (5) The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health or his designee.

16 (6) The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
17 or his designee.

18 (7) The executive director of the Louisiana Office of Community
19 Development or his designee.

20 (8) The director of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and
21 Emergency Preparedness or his designee.

22 (9) The executive director of the Louisiana Rural Water Association or
23 his designee.

24 (10) The executive director of the Police Jury Association of Louisiana
25 or his designee.

26 (11) The executive director of the Louisiana Municipal Association or his
27 designee.

28 (12) The president of the Louisiana Association of Planning and
29 Development Districts or his designee.

30 (13) The president of the Senate or his designee.

1 (14) The speaker of the House of Representatives or his designee.

2 (15) The chairman of the Louisiana Rural Caucus or a member of the
 3 Louisiana Rural Caucus designated by the chairman.

4 (16) The commissioner of agriculture and forestry or his designee.

5 (17) The executive secretary of the Louisiana Public Service Commission
 6 or his designee.

7 B. Members shall serve terms concurrent with the governor.

8 C. The governor's designee to the Delta Regional Authority shall serve
 9 as chairman and shall develop procedures for the operation of the committee.

10 D. The committee shall meet as necessary at the call of the chairman. A
 11 majority of the members of the committee shall constitute a quorum for the
 12 transaction of business.

13 E. All official actions of the committee shall require the affirmative vote
 14 of a majority of the members in attendance.

15 F. The governor or the chairman of the committee may request
 16 employees of federal, state, or local agencies involved with rural water systems
 17 to participate as nonvoting members of the committee.

18 G. The committee may request administrative and technical support
 19 from the governor's office to carry out the committee's functions and
 20 responsibilities as provided in this Part.

21 H. Members of the committee shall serve without compensation.
 22 Legislative members of the committee shall receive such per diem and expenses
 23 as provided for legislators during attendance at legislative committees and from
 24 the same source.

25 I. The names of the members who will serve on the committee shall be
 26 submitted to the governor not later than August 15, 2019.

27 §220.33. Functions; recommendations

28 A. The committee shall have the following functions and duties:

29 (1) To advise the governor on all matters relative to rural water systems
 30 in Louisiana.

1 (2) To advise and provide technical assistance to rural water systems,
2 local governments, and nonprofit organizations to improve infrastructure and
3 ensure compliance with state and federal regulations.

4 (3) To work collaboratively to assess and prioritize rural water system
5 deficiencies.

6 (4) To offer emergency response assessments for rural water systems
7 during public health emergencies upon request.

8 (5) To foster cooperation among federal, state, and local governmental
9 agencies on all issues pertaining to rural water systems.

10 (6) To conduct such studies as are necessary to develop and implement
11 a comprehensive rural water infrastructure plan.

12 (7) To create a clearinghouse of educational materials to assist rural
13 water systems, local governments, and nonprofit organizations.

14 (8) To review programs, conditions, trends, and engineering findings
15 which affect rural water systems in order to make recommendations for
16 improvements.

17 (9) To assist in the identification of potential sources of funding for rural
18 water systems and to develop advice with respect to which expenditures are in
19 the best interest of the state.

20 B. The committee shall advise and make recommendations to the
21 governor on the following:

22 (1) Establishing funding criteria for rural water systems.

23 (2) Establishing a process to hold noncompliant water systems
24 accountable including legislative audits and mandatory management training.

25 (3) Increasing inspection and enforcement of rural water systems by
26 state agencies.

27 (4) Establishing a system for the review of engineering proposals for
28 infrastructure upgrades to rural water systems.

29 (5) Developing financial incentives for rural water systems to consolidate
30 when deemed appropriate.

1 (6) Developing recommendations for legislative action relative to rural
2 water systems.

3 C. The committee shall submit a written report to the governor by
4 March first of each year relative to the progress, challenges, and
5 recommendations concerning policy and possible legislation relative to rural
6 water systems.

7 Section 3. This Act shall become effective upon signature by the governor or, if not
8 signed by the governor, upon expiration of the time for bills to become law without signature
9 by the governor, as provided by Article III, Section 18 of the Constitution of Louisiana. If
10 vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become
11 effective on the day following such approval.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____