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## DIGEST

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HR 119 Engrossed

2024 Regular Session

Mike Johnson

Authorizes and requests the chairman House Committee of Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and Rural Development to appoint a subcommittee, entitled the La. Emergency Beetle Committee, to study and recommend rules and actions to address forest devastation caused by beetle infestation, problems related to dead trees on private properties near power lines and other issues and effects on public rights-of-way caused by the danger and effects of such dead trees, and to consider whether certain regulations by the Dept. of Environmental Quality may be suspended during emergency situations caused by natural disasters.

Requires the chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and Rural Development to appoint the members of the subcommittee.

Requires the state representative for House District 27 to serve as the chairman of the subcommittee.

Requires the subcommittee to solicit the input, recommendation, and advice of the following entities:

- (1) The La. Department of Agriculture and Forestry.
- (2) The La. Public Service Commission.
- (3) The La. Forestry Association.
- (4) The Police Jury Association of La.
- (5) The La. Municipal Assoc.
- (6) The La. Department of Environmental Quality.
- (7) The La. Division of Administration.
- (8) The office of the governor.
- (9) The La. Loggers Assoc.
- (10) The La. Department of Insurance.

Requires the subcommittee to advocate in support of the Congressional bill, S. 3838 of the 118<sup>th</sup>

Congress of 2024, also known as the Emergency Pine Beetle Response Act of 2024, and to request the La. Congressional Delegation to support such Act as well as any other Congressional instrument that address the issue of beetle infestation.

Requires the subcommittee to also focus its study on raising public awareness on beetle infestation, the dangers of it, and making recommendations on prevention or a remediation plan.

Requires members of the subcommittee to serve without compensation, except per diem or expense reimbursement to which they may be individually entitled to.

Requires the subcommittee to convene its first meeting no later than Aug. 1, 2024, at the call of the chairman of the subcommittee, and the subcommittee to hold such meetings as may be necessary to fulfill its duties. Requires the subcommittee to elect a vice chairman and other officers as it deems appropriate at the first meeting.

Requires the House Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and Rural Development to provide staff assistance to the commission upon the request of the chairman of the subcommittee.

Requires the subcommittee to submit a report of its findings and recommendations of rules and actions by Jan. 15, 2025, to the House Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and Rural Development, the commissioner of the La. Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry, and the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library.

#### Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and Rural Development to the original bill:

1. Make a technical change.