

ACT No. 263

2017 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 533

BY REPRESENTATIVES HUNTER, BAGNERIS, BISHOP, COX, JACKSON,
MARCELLE, AND PIERRE AND SENATORS BARROW, BOUDREAUX, AND
CLAITOR

1 AN ACT

2 To enact Part V of Subchapter B of Chapter 5-F of Title 40 of the Louisiana Revised
3 Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 40:1290.1 through 1290.4, relative to
4 drinking water; to provide for legislative findings; to require a collaborative effort
5 to improve public drinking water quality; to require reporting; to provide for a
6 termination date; and to provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. Part V of Subchapter B of Chapter 5-F of Title 40 of the Louisiana
9 Revised Statutes of 1950, comprised of R.S. 40:1290.1 through 1290.4, is hereby enacted
10 to read as follows:

11 PART V. STATE-LEVEL COLLABORATION TO
12 IMPROVE PUBLIC DRINKING WATER QUALITY

13 §1290.1. Legislative findings; purpose

14 A. The Legislature of Louisiana does hereby find and declare the
15 following:

16 (1) The provision of water for public use and consumption not only safe but
17 also acceptable in appearance, taste, and odor is of the highest priority.

18 (2) Water aesthetically unacceptable can undermine the confidence of
19 consumers, will lead to complaints, and could lead to the use of water from sources
20 which are less safe.

21 (3) Generally, consumers have no means of judging the safety of their water
22 themselves, but their attitude towards the water supply and water suppliers is often

1 greatly affected by the aspects of water quality they are able to perceive with their
2 own senses.

3 (4) It is natural for consumers to regard with suspicion water that appears
4 dirty or discolored or that has an unpleasant taste or smell. Even though these
5 characteristics may not in themselves be of direct consequence, they may
6 consequently cause a substantial number of persons to discontinue using a public
7 water system.

8 (5) On July 28, 2010, through Resolution 64/292, the United Nations General
9 Assembly explicitly recognized the right to safe and clean drinking water and
10 sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all
11 human rights.

12 (6) In November 2002, the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social,
13 and Cultural Rights adopted General Comment No. 15, The Right to Water, which
14 states the human right to water is indispensable for leading a life in human dignity
15 and is a prerequisite for the realization of other human rights.

16 B. The purpose of this Part is to request the Louisiana Department of Health
17 to lead a collaborative effort to improve public drinking water quality in this state,
18 and to develop recommendations to the legislature concerning effective and
19 responsible practices to improve and maintain the quality of drinking water provided
20 by water utility systems.

21 §1290.2. State-level collaboration to improve public drinking water quality

22 A. The Louisiana Department of Health shall lead a collaborative effort to
23 evaluate the issues and conditions of drinking water treatment and distribution in
24 communities throughout Louisiana by performing a thorough evaluation of all of the
25 following:

26 (1) The sanitary survey results for each water utility system across
27 Louisiana.

28 (2) The effects deteriorating systems have on the safety, health, and
29 well-being of Louisiana families, communities, and businesses.

1 B. The Louisiana Department of Health shall engage and solicit, as
2 necessary, input, recommendations, and guidance from interested parties and
3 stakeholders including but not limited to any of the following:

4 (1) State and local agencies involved in the regulation, treatment, and
5 distribution of drinking water.

6 (2) Technical experts at the university and consulting levels.

7 (3) Water utility system owners and operators, community members, and
8 state legislators from areas with known public water quality issues.

9 §1290.3. Reporting

10 A. The Louisiana Department of Health shall develop a report of the results
11 of the collaborative effort required by this Part, including findings,
12 recommendations, and proposed legislation, if necessary, and shall submit the report
13 to the House and Senate committees on health and welfare no later than thirty days
14 prior to the convening of the 2020 Regular Legislative Session.

15 B. The Louisiana Department of Health shall submit an interim progress
16 report no later than thirty days prior to the convening of the regular legislative
17 session of each year until the final report required by Subsection A of this Section
18 is submitted.

19 §1290.4. Termination

20 The provisions of this Part shall terminate on December 31, 2020.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

APPROVED: _____