

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 132

BY SENATOR HEWITT

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Transportation and Development to study the privatization of ferry operations throughout the state of Louisiana.

WHEREAS, pursuant to R.S. 48:21, the functions of the department shall be to study, administer, construct, improve, maintain, repair, and regulate the use of public transportation systems and to perform such other functions with regard to public highways, roads, and other transportation related facilities as may be conferred on the department by applicable law; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to R.S. 48:25, the department may take over, control, operate, and regulate such ferries, barges, or other means of transportation as it thinks necessary to the public and it may let franchises or enter into contracts for these services in the name of the state, alone or jointly with the parishes or municipalities of the state, or with other states, or with the political subdivisions of other states; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation currently oversees the operation of three ferry crossings; and

WHEREAS, the transportation of goods and human resources are utilized by ferry operations on a state and national level, and the reliability and efficient transportation are key components of economic development; and

WHEREAS, research has shown that private ferry operations improved reliability and efficiency due to a decrease of lapses in operations and repairs; and

WHEREAS, private companies have the ability to take the burden off of taxpayers by providing additional ferries on standby and immediately implement replacement vessels.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Transportation and Development to study and analyze current ferry operations throughout the state including but not limited to the following criteria:

(1) The total amount of passengers by ferry crossing based on a daily, monthly, and annual basis.

(2) Performance data by ferry crossing including missed trips and on-time performance.

(3) The total cost of vessel insurance, for the years 2016 through 2020, for each by ferry crossing that is currently being operated in the state.

(4) The total cost of vessel maintenance and repairs, for the years 2016 through 2020, for each by ferry crossing that is currently being operated in the state.

(5) The total amount of fares collected, for the years 2016 through 2020, for each ferry crossing that is currently being operated in the state.

(6) The total amount of employee compensation for the crew of each ferry crossing and each Department of Transportation and Development employee managing a ferry, including salaries, benefits, and retirement plans.

(7) The total amount of fare reductions all ferry toll exemptions provided for in law by each ferry crossing.

(8) The total amount of anticipated downtime and deferred maintenance on each vessel, for the years 2021 through 2024, summarized by ferry crossing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Department of Transportation shall submit a report and present it to the Senate and House Transportation, highway and public works committees as well as the Joint Legislative Committee on the Budget no later than December 31, 2021.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report shall include recommendations on how to maximize the efficiency of ferries at the lowest possible cost and include best practices from other states.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Department of Transportation and Development.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE