

2018 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 168

BY REPRESENTATIVE MCFARLAND

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Agriculture to study the economic impact of current and potential rules and regulations regarding forest crops, including but not limited to statutory provisions and local ordinances.

WHEREAS, forest crops are the number one agricultural commodity in Louisiana, with an economic value of \$3.6 billion; and

WHEREAS, the forest products industry is Louisiana's second largest manufacturing employer, with over nine hundred firms in forty-five parishes directly employing over twenty-five thousand people; and

WHEREAS, an additional eight thousand people are employed in the harvesting and transportation of forest crops; and

WHEREAS, forest land owners currently pay timber severance taxes and property taxes as provided for in Article VII, Section (4)(B) and Article VII, Section (18)(C) of the Constitution of Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, seventy-five percent of the timber severance tax is remitted to the governing authority of the parish in which severance or production occurs and may be used to repair roads utilized by companies harvesting and transporting forest crops in the parish; and

WHEREAS, in addition to property and severance taxes, some parishes further require forest land owners and companies harvesting and transporting forest crops to pay road bonds and permit fees; and

WHEREAS, parishes requiring companies harvesting and transporting forest crops to purchase additional liability bonds and certificates of insurance and permit fees for hauling trucks can act as a deterrent for companies to perform work in the parish; and

WHEREAS, the combination of these taxes and fees creates a potentially disastrous effect on the forest industry's ability to operate, create jobs, and generate revenue for local governments and the state.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby request the Department of Agriculture to study the economic impact of current and potential rules and regulations regarding forest crops, including but not limited to statutory provisions and local ordinances which create or increase bond requirements and permit fees, and submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana no later than February 1, 2019.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the commissioner of the Department of Agriculture.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES