

2021 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 66

BY REPRESENTATIVE THOMPSON

RAILROADS: Urges and requests the Department of Transportation and Development to study and work with Interstate 20 Amtrak partners to develop a passenger rail service connecting Texas and Mississippi through North Louisiana

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development to study
3 the development of passenger rail services along the Interstate 20 corridor in
4 Louisiana in collaboration with other state transportation agencies in Texas and
5 Mississippi, along with Amtrak partners.

6 WHEREAS, the state of Louisiana is served by three long-distance Amtrak trains,
7 with New Orleans serving as a hub; and

8 WHEREAS, the three long-distance trains are the City of New Orleans, operating
9 between Chicago and New Orleans; the Sunset Limited, operating between Los Angeles and
10 New Orleans; and the Crescent, operating between New York, Atlanta, and New Orleans;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, there is currently no commuter or intercity corridor service provided by
13 Amtrak or other operators in the state of Louisiana; and

14 WHEREAS, passenger rail services can strengthen the intermodal transportation
15 system; and

16 WHEREAS, passenger rail services can create new options for users as they combine
17 different transportation modes to complete a trip; and

18 WHEREAS, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas are seeking to coordinate their efforts
19 in order to facilitate passenger rail services along the Interstate 20 corridor between
20 Marshall, Texas and Meridian, Mississippi, through north Louisiana; and

1 WHEREAS, north Louisiana is the only gap in the entire nation in Amtrak's service
2 lines; and

3 WHEREAS, bridging this gap would connect Dallas-Fort Worth all the way to
4 Atlanta; and

5 WHEREAS, federal funds originally allocated to the state of Texas are now available
6 for use in connection with rail infrastructure for the entire Interstate 20 corridor between
7 Marshall, Texas and Meridian, Mississippi; and

8 WHEREAS, Texas expressed a willingness to use a portion of those funds for the
9 entire Interstate 20 corridor; and

10 WHEREAS, Amtrak analyzed the route and determined that passenger rail
11 connectivity along the Interstate 20 corridor will not require an annual operating subsidy;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, passenger rail services along the Interstate 20 corridor, home to several
14 public institutions of higher education, will benefit the people of Louisiana by allowing
15 greater mobility and expanding potential labor and tourism markets access to the region; and

16 WHEREAS, passenger rail services will improve access between north Louisiana and
17 major regional economic and transportation centers in Dallas, Texas, and Atlanta, Georgia;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, traffic congestion on Interstate 20 from Shreveport to Dallas is only
20 expected to worsen over the next ten years, which makes the need for passenger rail service
21 more prevalent; and

22 WHEREAS, passenger rail service supports economic development, connects distant
23 communities, and helps reduce roadway congestion in major metropolitan regions.

24 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the
25 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request that the Department of Transportation
26 and Development to study the development of passenger rail services along the Interstate 20
27 corridor in Louisiana in collaboration with the state transportation agencies of Texas and
28 Mississippi and with Amtrak partners.

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation and
30 Development's recommendations shall consider several steps in Louisiana to allow

1 passengers the opportunity to travel throughout North Louisiana, and at a minimum, shall
2 include the following:

- 3 (1) The route alternatives.
- 4 (2) The station locations.
- 5 (3) The infrastructure needs.
- 6 (4) The ridership and revenue estimated.

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Transportation and
8 Development shall submit a written report to the House Committee on Transportation,
9 Highways, and Public Works detailing its findings and recommendations prior to March 1,
10 2022.

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

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HR 66 Engrossed

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Urges and requests the Dept. of Transportation and Development (DOTD) to coordinate the development of passenger rail services along the Interstate 20 corridor in Louisiana with the state transportation agencies of Texas and Mississippi and with Amtrak partners. Requires the DOTD to submit a written report to the House Committee on Transportation, Highways, and Public Works detailing its findings by Feb. 28, 2022.