

Regular Session, 2011

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 94

BY REPRESENTATIVE HARRISON

A RESOLUTION

To authorize and request the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to study and examine possible alternative and additional sources of revenues to fund the operations of the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board.

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board (the board) was created in 1984 to support the vast historical commercial fisheries industry in the state of Louisiana because, although the seafood industry in this state had grown from a subsistence economy into a world class operation, it was challenged by dramatic changes in the marketplace and in the environment; and

WHEREAS, the commodities board, composed of fifteen members representing the different sectors of the industry, such as, harvesters, processors/wholesalers, restaurateurs/retailers, fisheries resource managers, public health officers, and marketing specialists, was mandated to strengthen and revitalize the Louisiana seafood industry, to identify threats and develop and execute strategic plans to meet those threats head on and overcome them; and

WHEREAS, the board's operating budget is derived from fishing license sales to Louisiana commercial fishermen and seafood wholesalers/retailers, as well as state and federal grants; and

WHEREAS, sales of licenses issued by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, generally, are decreasing with the move to a more urbanized population, and with the economic downturn and as a result of the natural and manmade disasters that South Louisiana has faced over the past five to six years, license issuance has decreased at a much more rapid pace, particularly in the commercial fishing industry; and

WHEREAS, this rapid decline in the issuance of commercial fishing licenses has left the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board with insufficient funds to fulfill its

statutory mission, and the lack of state funds overall means that there is not a readily available alternate source of revenue.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to study and examine possible alternative and additional sources of revenues to fund the operations of the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries consult with the National Conference of State Legislatures for information about how other states fund the operations of their commodities boards.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries submit a report of such findings to the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment and the Senate Committee on Natural Resources no later than January 31, 2012.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES