

1 WHEREAS, the USGS has identified large groundwater withdrawals for public
2 supply and industrial use in East Baton Rouge Parish as the cause of water level declines and
3 saltwater intrusion; and

4 WHEREAS, the USGS has stated that if groundwater withdrawals in Baton Rouge
5 continue into the future at historic rates, saltwater intrusion will continue to occur; and

6 WHEREAS, the office of conservation has stated in a previous report to the
7 legislature that without "publicly released plans for major groundwater pumpage reductions
8 from the users in East Baton Rouge" groundwater use rates at the "present level or along a
9 slightly upward trend seems a logical assumption, with all attendant consequences"; and

10 WHEREAS, the chief financial officer of the Baton Rouge Water Company stated
11 in open testimony at a Public Service Commission hearing in 2013, that, "Our long-term
12 solution, obviously, is the treatment plant with water from the Mississippi."; and

13 WHEREAS, it is expected that the costs of such a transition from groundwater to
14 surface water will be borne by the customers of the Baton Rouge Water Company, which
15 are the people of East Baton Rouge Parish and Ascension Parish; and

16 WHEREAS, such a transition likely will entail a sacrifice of drinking water quality
17 and could result in costly and hazardous situations commonly associated with a change of
18 drinking water source, as seen in Flint, Michigan, and elsewhere; and

19 WHEREAS, the legislature affirms its desire to see all actions necessary be taken to
20 maintain groundwater as the main source of safe drinking water for the public in East Baton
21 Rouge Parish and surrounding parishes; and

22 WHEREAS, all interested parties must come together to reach a long-range
23 conclusion to preserve the Southern Hills Aquifer and protect its water quality for future
24 generations.

25 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana creates the
26 Southern Hills Aquifer Protection Task Force to study and make recommendations to the
27 legislature, the office of conservation, and the Capital Area Ground Water Conservation
28 Commission to preserve the Southern Hills Aquifer and protect its water quality for future
29 generations.

30 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force created shall consist of the

1 following members:

2 (1) One member of the Senate, whose district is located at least partially within the
3 Capital Area Groundwater Conservation District, appointed by the president and whom shall
4 serve as chairperson.

5 (2) One member of the House of Representatives, whose district is located at least
6 partially within the Capital Area Groundwater Conservation District, appointed by the
7 speaker.

8 (3) The secretary of the Department of Natural Resources or his designee.

9 (4) The secretary of the Department of Environmental Quality or his designee.

10 (5) The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health or his designee.

11 (6) The commissioner of conservation or his designee.

12 (7) The public service commissioner representing District No. 2 or his designee.

13 (8) The public service commissioner representing District No. 3 or his designee.

14 (9) The mayor-president of the city of Baton Rouge and East Baton Rouge Parish or
15 his designee.

16 (10) The executive director of the Capital Area Groundwater Conservation District
17 or his designee.

18 (11) The president of the Baton Rouge Water Works Company or his designee.

19 (12) The president of the Louisiana Chemical Association or his designee.

20 (13) The president of the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry or his
21 designee.

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that such study should focus on the preservation of
23 the Southern Hills Aquifer and protection of its water quality for future generations.

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the task force shall serve
25 without compensation, except per diem or expense reimbursement to which they may be
26 individually entitled as members of their respective constituent organization.

27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force may conduct such meetings at
28 such times as it may deem necessary or convenient to enable it to exercise fully and
29 effectively its powers, perform its duties, and accomplish the objectives and purposes of this
30 Resolution.

