

2018 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 113

BY REPRESENTATIVE GREGORY MILLER (BY REQUEST)

WATERWAYS/CANALS: Relative to the disposition of property with respect to certain waterways

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 34:843(A)(1) and (B)(1) and to enact R.S. 34:843(B)(3) and (4),
3 relative to navigation; to provide for the removal of objects from waterways; to
4 provide for notice; to provide for plans to remove such objects; to provide for
5 riparian owners; to provide for causes of action; to provide for remedies; and to
6 provide for related matters.

7 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

8 Section 1. R.S. 34:843(A)(1) and (B)(1) are hereby amended and reenacted and
9 R.S. 34:843(B)(3) and (4) are hereby enacted to read as follows:

10 §843. Objects; removal; disposition

11 A.(1) The owner of any tug, towboat, barge, watercraft, ship, vessel,
12 equipment, machinery, or any object of any kind or description, whether foreign or
13 domestic, which has been left unattended, stored, junked, or abandoned in any canal,
14 coulee, drainage ditch, outfall canal, bayou, bay, lake, or any other waterway,
15 whether navigable or not, or on the banks thereof within the state of Louisiana, or the
16 owner of any such object moored or tied off in a drainage ditch or canal, or in an
17 outfall canal shall present a plan as provided ~~herein~~ in this Section to remove the
18 object from the waterway or bank within thirty days after receipt of a written notice
19 by certified mail from the federal, state, or local governing authority having
20 jurisdiction thereof, ~~hereinafter~~ referred to in this Section as an "authority", to

1 remove the object. In the event that the owner cannot be identified or located by the
 2 authority, the authority shall publish in the official journal of the parish where the
 3 object is located, a notice that the object shall be removed by the authority at any
 4 time after thirty calendar days of publication of the notice at the cost of the owner
 5 and shall be disposed of by the authority. If the object poses no immediate danger
 6 to life or property, the owner shall, within thirty days after receipt of notice by
 7 certified mail, present to the authority having jurisdiction over the matter, a plan for
 8 the removal of the object ~~as soon as possible~~ by a date certain, considering factors
 9 of safety, cost, and efficiency in accomplishing the removal. The authority shall
 10 approve or reject the plan within thirty days from the date of submission by the
 11 owner.

* * *

13 B.(1) In the event that a plan for removal of the object is not presented to the
 14 authority, ~~or~~ a plan is not approved by the authority, within the periods provided for
 15 in Paragraph A(1), or an approved plan is not executed within the allotted time
 16 specified within the plan, then the authority may have the object removed at the
 17 owner's cost and junk, discard, or otherwise dispose of the object or sell, exchange,
 18 or otherwise transfer ownership of the object to any person, corporation, or entity
 19 whatsoever for any price or consideration which the authority may deem advisable,
 20 or for no consideration, and apply the proceeds received, if any, to the cost of
 21 removing the object, and the balance, if any, shall become the property of the
 22 authority.

* * *

24 (3) In the event the owner of the object fails to execute a plan approved by
 25 the authority and the authority does not have the object removed in accordance with
 26 the power granted in Paragraph (1) of this Subsection, an adjacent property owner
 27 whose peaceful use and enjoyment and riparian rights are affected by the object may
 28 initiate litigation against the owner of the object. The court in such case may order
 29 the removal of the object pursuant to a plan offered by the adjacent property owner.

Proposed law retains present law and adds for the removal by the authority in the event the plan is not executed within the plan's timeline.

Proposed law authorizes the adjacent property owner to initiate litigation against the owner of the object when the owner of the object fails to execute a plan approved by the authority and the authority does not have the object removed. Authorizes the court in such case to order the removal of the object pursuant to a plan offered by the adjacent property owner. Specifies that the owner of the object is responsible for any and all costs associated with the removal of the object and for court costs.

Proposed law authorizes the adjacent property owner to initiate litigation against the owner of the object if the object has a negative impact on the peaceful use and enjoyment of an adjacent property and affects the adjacent property owner's riparian rights. Authorizes the court in such case to order the removal of the object pursuant to a plan offered by either party.

Proposed law requires the plan consider the object's effect on the adjacent property, effect on the adjacent owner's riparian rights, and the immediacy of any danger the object poses to life or property as adopted or modified by the court. Specifies that the owner of the object is responsible for any and all costs associated with the removal of the object and for court costs.

(Amends R.S. 34:843(A)(1) and (B)(1); Adds R.S. 34:843(B)(3) and (4))