

RÉSUMÉ DIGEST

ACT 611 (SB 560)

2018 Regular Session

Mizell

New law creates the Dairy Stabilization Study Commission for the purposes of studying and reviewing milk pricing in La., recommending best practices and strategies to best assist the dairy industry, and recommending any necessary statutory and regulatory changes to the legislature and the Dept. of Agriculture and Forestry related to the study.

Provides for the membership of the commission, comprised of 21 members, as follows:

- (1) The commissioner of agriculture or his designee.
- (2) Three dairy farmers appointed by the La. Farm Bureau Federation, Inc.
- (3) A dairy processor appointed by the La. Dairy Products Association.
- (4) A dairy distributor appointed by the La. Retailers Association.
- (5) The president of the Senate or his designee.
- (6) The speaker of the House of Representatives or his designee.
- (7) The chairman of the House Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture and Rural Development or his designee.
- (8) The chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture and Rural Development or his designee.
- (9) Two economists from a public postsecondary four-year institution appointed by the commissioner of higher education.
- (10) An agriculture economist appointed by the chancellor of the LSU AgCenter.
- (11) An agriculture economist appointed by the chancellor of the Southern AgCenter.
- (12) A consumer advocate appointed by the president of the Senate.
- (13) A consumer advocate appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives.
- (14) One member appointed by the Public Affairs Research Council of La.
- (15) One member appointed by the La. Association of Business and Industry.
- (16) One member appointed by the La. chapter of the National Federation of Independent Business.
- (17) An independent dairy processor appointed by the commissioner of agriculture.
- (18) The USDA Milk Market Administrator representing the Southeast Marketing Area Federal Order No. 7 or his designee.

Authorizes legislative members of the commission to receive the same per diem and travel allowance for attending meetings of the commission as is normally provided for meetings of legislative committees. Requires other members of the commission to serve without compensation.

Requires the legislature to provide the facilities needed by the commission to accomplish its tasks and designates staff from the Senate and House committees on agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and rural development to assist the commission in performing its duties and responsibilities.

Requires the chairmen of the Senate and House committees on agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and rural development to serve as cochairmen of the commission and convene the commission for its first meeting by Sept. 1, 2018.

Requires the commission to meet upon the call of the cochairmen as often as deemed necessary to carry out its duties. Requires the cochairmen to establish a meeting schedule with a minimum of three meetings and time line for completion of the commission's duties.

Authorizes the commission to hold public hearings as part of its evaluation process, and to appoint advisory groups to conduct studies, research or analyses, and make reports and recommendations with respect to a matter within the jurisdiction of the commission. Requires at least one member of the commission to serve on each advisory group.

Requires the names of the persons who are to serve on the commission to be submitted to the Senate president and the House speaker on or before Aug. 15, 2018.

Requires the commission to study and make recommendations on at least the following:

- (1) The retail price of milk and milk products in La., including an analysis of how cost markups of milk and milk products at the retail level affect the prices paid to milk processors, milk distributors, and dairy farmers.
- (2) A comparison of other state programs which set minimum prices paid to milk processors, milk distributors, and dairy farmers.
- (3) A comparison of other state programs which regulate or establish wholesale or retail prices of milk and milk products.
- (4) An analysis on the effectiveness of the disruptive trade practices provisions of the Dairy Stabilization Law (R.S. 3:4108) and rules adopted pursuant thereto.
- (5) An analysis of whether supply and demand forces influenced by federal and state dairy programs determine the price dairy farmers receive for raw milk.

Requires the commission to submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the Senate president, the House speaker, the Senate and House committees on agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and rural development no later than 60 days prior to the 2019 Regular Session.

Authorizes the commission to request and receive such records, data, and information produced by any public entity unless otherwise prohibited by prior law and requires the public entity to respond to the request in a timely manner.

Terminates the commission on June 30, 2019.

Effective August 1, 2018.

(Adds R.S. 24:121)