
DIGEST

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HB 565 Reengrossed

2023 Regular Session

Freiberg

Abstract: Creates the University Security District in East Baton Rouge Parish. Provides for the district's boundaries, purpose, governance, and funding, including the authority to impose a parcel fee.

Proposed law creates the University Security District in East Baton Rouge Parish as a political subdivision of the state for the purpose of aiding in crime prevention and providing for overall betterment of the district. Provides for district boundaries. Provides that the district shall be governed by a board of commissioners composed as follows:

- (1) Four members appointed by the president of La. State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College.
- (2) One member appointed by the board of directors of the Northgate Merchants Association.
- (3) One member appointed by the board of directors of the Southgate Merchants Association.
- (4) One member appointed by the member of the La. House of Representatives whose district encompasses all or the greater number of property owners in the area of the district.
- (5) One member appointed by the member of the La. Senate whose district encompasses all or the greater number of property owners in the area of the district.
- (6) One member appointed by each councilperson of the East Baton Rouge Metropolitan Council whose district, either wholly or in part, is included in the boundaries of the district.

Provides that members serve four-year staggered terms.

Proposed law provides for the district's powers and duties including the following:

- (1) To sue and be sued.
- (2) To adopt, use, and alter at will a corporate seal.
- (3) To receive and expend funds from an authorized parcel fee and other contributions and in accordance with an adopted budget.

- (4) To enter into contracts with individuals or entities, private or public.
- (5) To provide or enhance security patrols in the district, to provide for improved lighting, signage, or matters relating to the security of the district, to provide for the beautification of and improvement to the district, and to provide generally for the overall betterment of the district.

Proposed law authorizes the district, subject to voter approval, to impose and collect a parcel fee on each improved and unimproved parcel. Further provides that the amount of the fee shall be as follows:

- (1) For unimproved parcels zoned residential the fee shall be a flat fee per parcel of land not to exceed \$400 per year.
- (2) For unimproved and improved single-family parcels zoned residential the fee shall be a flat fee per parcel of land not to exceed \$400 per year.
- (3) For multiple adjacent residential parcels housing a single family dwelling the fee shall be a flat fee not to exceed \$600 per year.
- (4) For improved multi-family parcels zoned residential the fee shall be a flat fee not to exceed \$5,000 per year.
- (5) For unimproved and improved parcels zoned commercial the fee shall not exceed \$5,000 per year.

Provides that the initial fee shall not exceed \$150 per parcel per year.

Proposed law provides that the fee shall expire at the end of the term provided for in the proposition authorizing the fee, not to exceed 15 years. Authorizes the board to increase the fee one time without election not less than three years after initial approval. Provides that the increased fee shall not exceed \$250 per parcel per year, but shall not exceed the maximum amount provided in proposed law. Authorizes renewal of the fee, subject to voter approval, for a term not to exceed 15 years. Prohibits the imposition of the fee on parcels owned by the East Baton Rouge Parish Housing Authority or its affiliated or subsidiary entities.

Proposed law provides that the fee shall be collected in the same manner and at the same time as ad valorem taxes and that any unpaid fee shall be added to the parish tax rolls and enforced with the same authority and subject to the same penalties and procedures as unpaid ad valorem taxes. Requires the tax collector to remit to the district all amounts collected not more than 60 days after collection and authorizes the district to enter into an agreement with the tax collector to authorize the retention of a collection fee, not to exceed 1% of the amount collected.

Proposed law requires the district's board to adopt an annual budget in accordance with the La. Local Government Budget Act and provides that the district shall be subject to audit by the legislative

auditor.

Proposed law provides that it is the purpose and intent of proposed law that the additional law enforcement personnel and their services provided for through the fees authorized by proposed law shall be supplemental to, and not in lieu of, personnel and services provided in the district by the city-parish.

Proposed law provides that if the district ceases to exist, all district funds shall be transmitted to the governing authority of East Baton Rouge Parish and used for law enforcement purposes in the area that comprised the district.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 33:9097.37)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The House Floor Amendments to the engrossed bill:

1. Change the district's boundaries.
2. Prohibit the imposition of the fee on parcels owned by the East Baton Rouge Parish Housing Authority or its affiliated or subsidiary entities.