

2024 Regular Session

SENATE BILL NO. 201

BY SENATOR COUSSAN

SPECIAL DISTRICTS. Provides for the creation of the Cajundome Commission. (8/1/24)

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AN ACT

To enact Chapter 31-C of Title 51 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, to be comprised of R.S. 51:2122 through 2123, relative to the Cajundome Commission; to provide with respect to the creation of the Cajundome Commission; to provide for the governance of the commission; to provide for the composition, powers, duties, and functions of the board of commissioners; to provide for the purpose and authority of the commission; to authorize the commission to adopt rules; to provide for definitions; and to provide for related matters.

Notice of intention to introduce this Act has been published.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. Chapter 31-C of Title 51 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, comprised of R.S. 51:2122 through 2123, is hereby enacted to read as follows:

Chapter 31-C. CAJUNDOME COMMISSION

§2122. Cajundome Commission; board of commissioners; membership

A. The Cajundome Commission, hereinafter referred to as the "commission", was established in 1987 pursuant to an intergovernmental contract between the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, formerly the

1 University of Southwestern Louisiana, hereinafter referred to as the
2 "University", and the city of Lafayette, hereinafter referred to as the "city",
3 under authority of La. Const. Art. VII, Sec. 14(C) and La. R.S. 33:1332, as a
4 joint commission and body corporate to control and operate the multi-purpose
5 academic, athletic, civic, and community assembly arena and convention center
6 and surrounding land located at 444 Cajundome Boulevard, Lafayette,
7 Louisiana, known as the Cajundome (collectively, the "Cajundome"). The
8 Cajundome is owned by the University through the Board of Supervisors for the
9 University of Louisiana System, for the public purpose of providing
10 entertainment, cultural, economic, and educational benefits to the community
11 of Lafayette and the Acadiana region. The commission was continued through
12 two subsequent intergovernmental contracts and three extensions thereof
13 between the University and the city. Act 319 of the 1995 Regular Session of the
14 Louisiana Legislature recognized the commission by adding it to the list of
15 employers participating in the Municipal Employees Retirement System.

16 B. The current intergovernmental contract providing for the commission
17 expires on July 31, 2024. To ensure the continued existence of the commission
18 upon expiration of the intergovernmental contract, and to prevent any
19 disruption to the management, operation, or maintenance of the Cajundome or
20 the rights, benefits, debts, or obligations of the presently existing commission,
21 effective immediately upon the expiration of the current intergovernmental
22 contract, the commission is hereby statutorily continued as a political
23 subdivision of the state to develop, manage, operate, and maintain the
24 Cajundome. In all respects except as otherwise expressly provided in this
25 Chapter, the commission shall continue in existence as presently constituted,
26 with and subject to all rights, benefits, debts, and obligations in existence as of
27 the date of expiration of the current intergovernmental contract, with no
28 interruption whatsoever. For purposes of R.S. 39:112, any project undertaken
29 by the commission shall be considered to be owned and operated by the State.

1 **C. The commission shall be domiciled in the parish of Lafayette.**

2 **D.(1) The commission shall be governed by a board of commissioners,**
3 **hereinafter referred to as the "Board", composed of five persons. Except as**
4 **provided in Paragraph (2) of this Subsection, each member of the board shall**
5 **be appointed for a term of four years and shall serve until their successors have**
6 **been appointed. Members shall be appointed as follows:**

7 **(a) Two by the president of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, with**
8 **one appointment being a minority.**

9 **(b) Two by the Mayor-President of the Lafayette City-Parish**
10 **Consolidated Government.**

11 **(c) One by the Lafayette City Council.**

12 **(2) The members as of the date of expiration of the current**
13 **intergovernmental contract shall continue to serve their then-current terms.**
14 **Upon expiration of their terms, the members as of such date other than the**
15 **President shall be replaced by members appointed by the appointing authorities**
16 **set forth in Paragraph (1) of this Subsection as their terms expire in the**
17 **following order: first by the president of the University of Louisiana at**
18 **Lafayette; second by the Mayor-President of the Lafayette City-Parish**
19 **Consolidated Government; third by the board of commissioners of the**
20 **Lafayette Economic Development Authority; fourth by the president of the**
21 **University of Louisiana at Lafayette; and fifth by the Lafayette City Council.**

22 **(3) Any vacancy occurring in the membership of the board shall be filled**
23 **by the appointing authorities set forth in Paragraph (1) of this Subsection, as to**
24 **the members respectively appointed by them. Any person appointed to fill a**
25 **vacancy shall serve for the remainder of the unexpired term. The appointing**
26 **authorities set forth in Paragraph (1) of this Subsection, as appropriate, may**
27 **remove any member respectively appointed by them at any time, with or**
28 **without cause and solely at their discretion.**

29 **E. The board shall elect, from its membership, a chair, a vice chair, and**

1 a secretary-treasurer.

2 F. A majority of the total membership of the board shall constitute a
3 quorum in order to transact business of the commission. No contract shall be
4 approved or any financial obligation incurred by or on behalf of the commission
5 unless approved by a majority vote of the members of the board; provided,
6 however, that the board may delegate to its chair or to the commission's
7 director the authority to enter into contracts or incur financial obligations that
8 the board determines to be in the commission's best interest for the efficient
9 operation of the Cajundome.

10 G. Members of the board shall serve without compensation; however,
11 they shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred while attending to the business
12 of the board or the commission.

13 §2123. Cajundome Commission; purpose; function; authority; powers; duties

14 A. The commission shall develop, manage, operate, and maintain the
15 Cajundome including any additions or appurtenances thereto for the public
16 purpose of providing entertainment, cultural, economic, and educational
17 benefits to the community of Lafayette and the Acadiana region.

18 B. The commission, through its board, may sue and be sued in the courts
19 of its domicile and service of process shall be made on the chair of the Board or,
20 in the absence of the chair, upon the vice chair.

21 C. The commission, acting through its board, shall have all authority and
22 power to effectuate the purposes of the commission, including but not limited
23 to the following rights and powers:

24 (1) To acquire, purchase, lease as lessee, and hold and use any property,
25 movable or immovable, tangible or intangible, or any interest therein that is
26 necessary or desirable to carry out the purposes of the commission and to sell,
27 lease as lessor, transfer, dispose of, or encumber any property or interest
28 therein acquired by the commission.

29 (2) To develop, manage, operate, and maintain the Cajundome, including

1 any and all additions and appurtenances thereto; provided, however, that the
2 construction of additions, improvements, or renovations to the Cajundome shall
3 be done only with permission of the University as owner of the Cajundome.

4 (3) To execute contracts of any sort with public or private entities to
5 effectuate the provisions of this Chapter.

6 (4) To execute contracts or agreements with any person, corporation,
7 association, or other entity, including private persons, public corporations,
8 political subdivisions, the government of the United States or any of its agencies,
9 the state of Louisiana or any of its agencies, or any combination thereof, for or
10 relating to the use of the Cajundome's facilities, services, and equipment.

11 (5) To fix, collect, consent to, and revise rates, charges, rentals, and other
12 terms for the use of the Cajundome's facilities, services, and equipment as may
13 be necessary or appropriate in the board's discretion or as authorized by the
14 Board, including but not limited to contracts with promoters for such use upon
15 terms authorized by the board.

16 (6) To establish rules and regulations for the conduct of the commission's
17 affairs, including but not limited to rules and regulations governing the
18 management and operation of the Cajundome and its facilities, services,
19 equipment, programs, and activities.

20 (7) To accept gifts, grants, and donations of property and money.

21 (8) To cooperate with the state of Louisiana or any political subdivision,
22 department, agency, or corporation thereof for the development, operation, or
23 maintenance of the Cajundome to accomplish the purposes of this Chapter on
24 any basis, including the matching of funds, and by participating in projects
25 authorized by federal or state law.

26 (9) To contract with, employ, and fix the compensation and terms of
27 employment of agents or employees as may be necessary or appropriate to
28 develop, manage, operate, and maintain the Cajundome.

29 (10) To pledge all or any part of its revenues for any lawful purpose to

1 effectuate the provisions of this Chapter.

2 (11) To incur debt, issue bonds, and pledge payment of bonds issued by
 3 the commission for any authorized purpose pursuant to Part XII of Chapter 4
 4 of Subtitle II of Title 39 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950.

5 D. All policies, procedures, delegations, authorizations, contracts, and
 6 obligations of the board or commission in effect on the effective date of this Act
 7 shall continue in full force and effect unless and until amended by future action
 8 of the board.

The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by James Benton.

DIGEST

SB 201 Engrossed

2024 Regular Session

Coussan

Present law established the Cajundome Commission in 1987 pursuant to an intergovernmental contract between the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (ULL) and the city of Lafayette under authority of present law, as a joint commission and body corporate to control and operate the area collectively known as the Cajundome. Furthermore, the commission was continued through two subsequent intergovernmental contracts and three extensions.

Present law recognized the commission by adding it to the list of employers participating in the MERS.

Present law provides that the current intergovernmental contract providing for the commission expires on July 31, 2024.

Proposed law continues the existence of the commission upon expiration of the intergovernmental contract, and to prevent any disruption to the management, operation, or maintenance of the Cajundome or the rights, benefits, debts, or obligations of the presently existing commission.

Proposed law provides that effective immediately upon the expiration of the current intergovernmental contract, the commission is statutorily continued as a political subdivision of the state.

Proposed law provides that in all respects except as otherwise expressly provided in proposed law, the commission shall continue in existence as presently constituted, with and subject to all rights, benefits, debts, and obligations in existence as of the date of expiration of the current intergovernmental contract, without interruption.

Proposed law provides that for purposes of present law, any project undertaken by the commission shall be considered to be owned and operated by the state.

Proposed law provides that the commission shall be domiciled in the parish of Lafayette.

Proposed law provides that the commission shall be governed by a board of commissioners composed of five persons appointed as follows:

- (1) Two by the president of the ULL, with one appointment being a minority.
- (2) Two by the Mayor-President of the Lafayette City-Parish Consolidated Government.
- (3) One by the Lafayette City Council.

Proposed law provides that the board shall elect, from its membership, a chair, a vice chair, and a secretary-treasurer.

Proposed law provides that no contract shall be approved or any financial obligation incurred by or on behalf of the commission unless approved by a majority vote of the members of the board; provided, however, that the board may delegate to its chair or to the commission's director the authority to enter into contracts or incur financial obligations that the board determines to be in the commission's best interest for the efficient operation of the Cajundome.

Proposed law provides that members of the board shall serve without compensation; however, they shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred while attending to the business of the board or the commission.

Proposed law provides that the commission shall develop, manage, operate, and maintain the Cajundome.

Proposed law provides that the commission, through its board, may sue and be sued in the courts of its domicile and service of process shall be made on the chair of the board or, in the absence of the chair, upon the vice chair.

Proposed law provides that the commission, acting through its board, shall have all authority and power to effectuate the purposes of the commission, including but not limited to the following rights and powers:

- (1) To acquire, purchase, lease as lessee, and hold and use any property that is necessary or desirable to carry out the purposes of the commission and to sell, lease as lessor, transfer, dispose of, or encumber any property or interest acquired by the commission.
- (2) To develop, manage, operate, and maintain the Cajundome.
- (3) To execute contracts of any sort with public or private entities to effectuate the provisions of proposed law.
- (4) To execute contracts or agreements with any person, corporation, association, or other entity, for or relating to the use of the Cajundome's facilities, services, and equipment.
- (5) To fix, collect, consent to, and revise rates, charges, rentals, and other terms for the use of the Cajundome's facilities, services, and equipment as may be necessary or appropriate.
- (6) To establish rules and regulations for the conduct of the commission's affairs.
- (7) To accept gifts, grants, and donations of property and money.
- (8) To cooperate with the state of La. or any political subdivision, department, agency, or corporation thereof for the development, operation, or maintenance of the Cajundome.
- (9) To contract with, employ, and fix the compensation and terms of employment of

agents or employees as may be necessary or appropriate to develop, manage, operate, and maintain the Cajundome.

- (10) To pledge all or any part of its revenues for any lawful purpose to effectuate the provisions of proposed law.
- (11) To incur debt, issue bonds, and pledge payment of bonds issued by the commission for any authorized purpose pursuant to present law.

Proposed law provides that all policies, procedures, delegations, authorizations, contracts, and obligations of the board or commission in effect on the effective date of proposed law shall continue in full force and effect unless and until amended by future action of the board.

Effective August 1, 2024.

(Adds R.S. 51:2122-2123)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by Senate

Committee Amendments Proposed by Senate Committee on Local and Municipal Affairs to the original bill

- 1. Requires one of the appointments by the president of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette to be a minority.
- 2. Increases the members appointed by the Mayor-President of the Lafayette City-Parish Consolidated Government from one to two.
- 3. Provides delegation authority from the board to its chair or to the commission's director to enter into contracts or incur financial obligations that the board determines to be in the commission's best interest for the efficient operation of the Cajundome.