

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 306

BY REPRESENTATIVE WALTERS

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Transportation and Development to establish the Urban Infrastructure Planning Task Force; to identify the key infrastructure project needs in urban areas; to assess the financial feasibility of urban infrastructure projects; to assess the potential impacts of urban infrastructure projects; to evaluate the efficiency of urban infrastructure projects; and to evaluate ways urban infrastructure projects improve the quality of life of Louisiana citizens.

WHEREAS, according to the 2023 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law/Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act Annual Report, over ten billion two hundred million dollars in funding was allocated to support over seven hundred awards and projects in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, a backlog is defined as the work that a company or organization has contracted to perform, but has yet to be started or completed; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's state highway and bridge needs have increased approximately six billion six million dollars from 2013 to 2022; and

WHEREAS, according to the secretary of the Department of Transportation and Development, Louisiana currently faces an estimated eighteen million nine hundred thousand dollars in backlog for highway and bridge needs; and

WHEREAS, according to the city of New Orleans's Office of Strategic Engagement and Special Projects, there are currently approximately two hundred infrastructure projects; and

WHEREAS, according to Fox 8 Local First, many projects in New Orleans are taking more than twice the time allocated in the original contracts to be completed; and

WHEREAS, according to MOVEBR, there are currently over seventy transportation infrastructure projects in Baton Rouge; and

WHEREAS, since 2022, only nine transportation infrastructure projects have been completed; and

WHEREAS, according to the Louisiana Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers, Louisiana's report card for infrastructure is reportedly a "D+", meaning it is poorly executed; and

WHEREAS, approximately thirteen and a half percent of Louisiana bridges are structurally deficient; and

WHEREAS, with the increase in travel of Louisiana drivers, delays in urban infrastructure projects are having tremendous negative economic impacts on the traveling public, businesses, refineries, and chemical plants; and

WHEREAS, according to the International Journal of Transportation Science and Technology, Louisiana's interstate system has grown sixty-one percent between 2000 and 2019; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, there were seven hundred twenty-seven fatalities on Louisiana roadways, with ninety-two occurring on interstates; and

WHEREAS, the number of fatalities on Louisiana's roads grew by fourteen percent in 2020; and

WHEREAS, bridges on interstates constructed on viaducts or embankments on elevated sections over water bodies, marshes, and subterranean utilities carry high-speed traffic on fixed-width lanes and shoulders; and

WHEREAS, the composition of these lanes and shoulders on bridges restrict right-of-way and frequently provide an inadequate clear zone for safe recovery; and

WHEREAS, according to the Louisiana Transportation Research Center, Louisiana has approximately two hundred miles of vintage 1960s concrete safety walk bridge rail systems currently in use on Louisiana bridges; and

WHEREAS, many of these systems do not meet the current crash performance requirements of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware Second Edition specifications; and

WHEREAS, a consent decree is a negotiated agreement that is entered as a court order for a legally binding performance improvement plan and typically arises from investigations into misconduct, which can span over a variety of issues; and

WHEREAS, the city of New Orleans entered into a consent decree following an investigation by the Department of Justice into civil rights violations and other misconduct; and

WHEREAS, the city of Baton Rouge entered into a consent decree with the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the state of Louisiana related to stormwater management; and

WHEREAS, the city of Shreveport entered into a consent decree with the Department of Justice and the United States Environmental Protection Agency regarding the city's water and sewer systems.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Transportation and Development to establish the Urban Infrastructure Planning Task Force to do the following:

- (1) Identify the key infrastructure project needs in urban areas.
- (2) Assess the financial feasibility of all urban infrastructure projects.
- (3) Assess the potential impacts of urban infrastructure projects.
- (4) Evaluate the efficiency of urban infrastructure projects.
- (5) Evaluate ways the urban infrastructure projects improve the quality of life of Louisiana citizens.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Urban Infrastructure Planning Task Force be comprised of the following members:

- (1) The mayor of the city of New Orleans or his designee.
- (2) The New Orleans chief engineer or city designer.
- (3) The mayor of the city of Baton Rouge or his designee.
- (4) The Baton Rouge city engineer or city designer.
- (5) The mayor of the city of Shreveport or his designee.
- (6) The Shreveport city engineer or community planner.
- (7) The parish president of Jefferson Parish or his designee.
- (8) The director of the Department of Engineering within the Jefferson Parish Council or his designee.
- (9) The mayor-president of the city of Lafayette or his designee.
- (10) The director of the Public Works Department within the Lafayette Consolidated Government.
- (11) The planning section chiefs or their designees for each corresponding city, excluding Metairie.

(12) The chief executive officer of the Midcontinent Independent System Operator or his designee.

(13) The chief executive officer of the Southwest Power Pool or his designee.

(14) Two graduate students from Southern University A&M College's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, selected by the department chair.

(15) Two graduate students from Louisiana State University's College of Art and Design, selected by the dean of the college.

(16) Two graduate students from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette's School of Architecture and Design, selected by the director of the school.

(17) Two graduate students from Grambling State University's Department of Engineering Technology, selected by the department head.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall be staffed by the Department of Transportation and Development as determined by the secretary of the department.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Urban Infrastructure Planning Task Force shall submit a written infrastructure report for 2030 to the House Transportation, Highways and Public Works committee by December 13, 2025.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Urban Infrastructure Planning Task Force submit a written infrastructure report for 2035 to the House Transportation, Highways and Public Works committee by December 13, 2029, with a mid-range written report submitted by February 13, 2027.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Urban Infrastructure Planning Task Force submit a written infrastructure report for 2040 to the House Transportation, Highways and Public Works committee by December 13, 2034, with a mid-range written report submitted by August 13, 2032.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the secretary of the Department of Transportation and Development.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES