

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 30 (Substitute for House Concurrent Resolution No. 21 by Representative Owen)

BY REPRESENTATIVE OWEN

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the commissioner of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry to study and make recommendations on the issues addressed by the Processing Revival and Intrastate Meat Exemption Act (PRIME Act) as proposed during the 118th United States Congress to enhance operations for small meat processing businesses in Louisiana, emphasize local control, economic resilience, support for small farmers, and meet the needs of Louisiana citizens.

WHEREAS, the Legislature of Louisiana recognizes the vital role that agriculture plays in the economic and cultural fabric of our state, with livestock and meat production serving as a cornerstone of rural communities, including parishes such as Vernon and Beauregard; and

WHEREAS, small meat processing facilities, including custom slaughter facilities, face significant regulatory barriers under the Federal Meat Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), which requires federal inspections for intrastate meat sales, imposing costly upgrades and operational challenges that hinder their ability to serve local markets; and

WHEREAS, the PRIME Act, sponsored by Representative Thomas Massie in the 118th Congress, proposed to amend federal law to exempt custom slaughter facilities from mandatory federal inspections for intrastate commerce, allowing direct sales to consumers, restaurants, and retailers under state regulatory oversight, thereby reducing costs and supporting local economies; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's small meat processors, such as those operating combined processing plants and meat markets, seek to process and sell locally raised meat directly to walk-in customers, restaurants, and other dining venues without the burden of federal or excessive state inspection requirements while maintaining rigorous state safety standards; and

WHEREAS, enabling small meat processors to operate more efficiently would lower the cost of beef for Louisiana consumers, create jobs, foster a boom in local processing, and reduce reliance on the four major meat processing conglomerates, keeping economic benefits within Louisiana communities; and

WHEREAS, state inspections, already in place for custom slaughter facilities, ensure food safety without the need for costly federal or additional state inspection processes, potentially saving state resources by reducing the need for state inspectors dedicated to wholesale operations; and

WHEREAS, local control over meat processing would allow Louisiana to tailor regulations to the unique needs of its producers and consumers, fostering innovation, supporting small farmers, and enhancing food security, as demonstrated during disruptions like the COVID-19 pandemic when centralized processing shortages left local demand unmet; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature of Louisiana affirms that the state possesses the inherent authority and capability to regulate intrastate meat processing effectively, and a state-level plan inspired by the PRIME Act's principles would align with home rule principles by empowering parishes and local stakeholders to support their agricultural economies; and

WHEREAS, a study by the Department of Agriculture and Forestry would provide critical insights into how Louisiana can implement policies to reduce regulatory burdens, redirect investments into local livestock industries, and build resilient local food systems, addressing the concerns of small meat processors in parishes across the state; and

WHEREAS, such a plan would ensure that Louisiana's meat processing industry continues to meet stringent safety and quality standards, protecting consumers while enabling small businesses to thrive.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the commissioner of the Louisiana Department Agriculture and Forestry to study and make recommendations on the issues addressed by the Processing Revival and Intrastate Meat Exemption Act, including the feasibility of exempting custom slaughter facilities from federal inspection requirements for intrastate sales, maintaining state safety inspections, and reducing regulatory costs for small meat processors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commissioner of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry shall develop a plan to enhance operations for small meat processing businesses in Louisiana, addressing the needs of processors to sell directly to consumers, restaurants, and retailers, support local livestock economies, and foster economic resilience while ensuring food safety and compliance with applicable state and federal laws.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry shall submit a written report of its findings to the House Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and Rural Development and the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and Rural Development, by March 1, 2026, detailing the findings of the study and proposing a plan, including any recommended legislation, to achieve these objectives.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE