

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 358

BY REPRESENTATIVE BAYHAM

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Transportation and Development to provide information regarding the number of closures and repairs, including all costs of the bridge repairs per year, to the Judge Seeber Bridge over the past seven years.

WHEREAS, the Judge Seeber Bridge is a vertical-lift bridge over the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal, which is owned by the state of Louisiana and operated by the Department of Transportation and Development; and

WHEREAS, the Judge Seeber Bridge was built in 1957 and rehabilitated in 2011, but maintains nearly all of the elements from its original construction; and

WHEREAS, the Judge Seeber Bridge is located on Louisiana Highway 39, also referred to as North Claiborne Avenue, in the city of New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, the Judge Seeber Bridge is one of the main links between New Orleans and the communities in St. Bernard Parish; and

WHEREAS, approximately twenty-six thousand two hundred fifty-five commuters travel on the Judge Seeber Bridge each day; and

WHEREAS, the Judge Seeber Bridge has been closed many times throughout its history; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation and Development has cited various reasons for the bridge closures, which include electrical issues, various repairs and maintenance, and vehicle accidents; and

WHEREAS, according to the 2023 report prepared by the American Road & Transportation Builders Association, approximately twelve percent of Louisiana's bridges were classified as structurally deficient; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, the Department of Transportation and Development implemented the Historic Bridge Management Plan for the Judge Seeber Bridge (the Plan) to provide guidance on preservation procedures regarding preventative maintenance and rehabilitation of the Judge Seeber Bridge; and

WHEREAS, the Plan's preventative maintenance includes condition-based activities and regular structural inspections directed towards continued structure serviceability; and

WHEREAS, the Plan's rehabilitation activities provide for required procedures to preserve and restore the bridge's structural condition; and

WHEREAS, according to the engineering data in the Plan, the Judge Seeber Bridge is in good overall condition and adequately serves its purpose of carrying vehicular traffic across the Industrial Canal; and

WHEREAS, several major disasters have occurred on the Judge Seeber Bridge; and

WHEREAS, in 1993, a barge hit the bridge, causing two vehicles to plunge into the canal; and

WHEREAS, according to the National Transportation Safety Board, at the time of this collapse, the bridge was vulnerable to vessel collisions due to inadequately protected piers and overall structure of the design, making it vulnerable to collapse; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, Hurricane Katrina severely damaged the bridge; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, a vehicle plunged into the canal due to a malfunction; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, the bridge malfunctioned, causing two vehicles to plummet four and a half feet; and

WHEREAS, continuous bridge closures impact traffic flow, economic activity, and emergency services; and

WHEREAS, the number of serious incidents occurring on the Judge Seeber Bridge poses a threat to public safety.

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 provide information regarding the number of closures and repairs, including all costs associated with the repairs per year, to the Judge Seeber Bridge over the past seven years.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation and Development shall submit a written report of its findings to the House Transportation, Highways and Public Works committee by January 15, 2026.

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