
HOUSE COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

2026 Regular Session

Substitute for Original House Bill No. 714 by Representative Phelps as proposed by the House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works

This document reflects the content of a substitute bill but is not in a bill form; page numbers in this document DO NOT correspond to page numbers in the substitute bill itself.

To enact R.S. 33:9131 and R.S. 48:390.2, relative to blighted or abandoned railroads and associated structures; to create a local railroad commission; to provide for board members of the railroad commission; to provide for study requirements of the commission; to provide for reporting requirements; to require railroad companies to remove or remediate blighted or abandoned railroads and related structures within one year; to ensure the preservation and upkeep of railroads, including painting and rust removal, of underpasses; and to provide for related matters.

Notice of intention to introduce this Act has been published as provided by Article III, Section 13 of the Constitution of Louisiana.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

Section 1. R.S. 33:9131 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

§9131. Northwest Louisiana Railroad Commission; operation by railroad commission

A. The Northwest Louisiana Railroad Commission, hereinafter referred to as the "commission", is hereby created for the purpose of studying and reporting findings and recommendations of any blighted or abandoned railroad crossings and associated structures in the parishes of Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, Desoto, Red River, and Webster.

B.(1) The commission shall be composed of one member appointed by the governing authority of each parish referenced in Subsection A of this Section, one member appointed by the office of multimodal commerce, the Department of Transportation and Development to advise and assign staff to assist the commission

in performing its duties, and the District 5 commissioner or his designee of the Louisiana Public Service Commission.

(2) The commission shall hold its first meeting not later than January 1, 2027 at which the commission shall select a chairman from among its membership and shall adopt rules of procedure, a work schedule, and any additional measures that it deems necessary for the timely performance of its duties. The members of the commission shall serve without compensation, and a vacancy in the membership shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. A majority of the members of the commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The commission shall be domiciled in Shreveport, Louisiana but may hold meetings elsewhere in the state.

(3) The commission shall meet biannually or as often as the chairman of the board convenes it, or on written request of any member.

C.(1) In conducting its study, the commission shall, at a minimum, do all of the following:

(a) Identify what railroads and associated structures require remediation or removal.

(b) Create a procedure for assessing and classifying the various conditions of railroads and associated structures pursuant to 49 CFR Part 213.

(c) Create a procedure for providing notice to railroad companies of the inadequate condition of their railroads.

(d) Maintain, inspect, and retain records to ensure railroads meet the minimum conditions and standards for its designated class.

(2) The commission shall submit a written report of its findings and recommendations relative to all of the study requirements provided in Paragraph (1) of this Subsection and any other matters related to railroad accountability that it deems appropriate to the House Committee on Transportation, Highways, and Public Works and the Senate Committee on Transportation, Highways, and Public Works not later than July 1, 2027.

Section 2. R.S. 48:390.2 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

§390.2. Shreveport railroad crossings; remediation or removal

A. Railroad companies shall remediate or remove any existing blighted or abandoned railroads and associated structures in the city of Shreveport, parish of Caddo, not later than January 1, 2027.

B. Underpasses of railroad crossings within the city of Shreveport shall be maintained and preserved, including but not limited to painting and rust removal, to prevent them from becoming a blight or nuisance.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB Draft

2026 Regular Session

Abstract: Creates the Northwest Louisiana Railroad Commission to address blighted or abandoned railroads and associated structures and require their removal at a specified date.

Proposed law creates the Northwest La. Railroad Commission (commission) for the purpose of studying and reporting findings and recommendations of any blighted or abandoned railroad crossings and associated structures in the parishes of Bienville, Bossier, Caddo, Claiborne, Desoto, Red River, and Webster.

Proposed law requires the commission be composed of one member appointed by the governing authority of each parish referenced in proposed law, one member appointed by the office of multimodal commerce, the Dept. of Transportation and Development to advise and assign staff to assist the commission in performing its duties, and the District 5 commissioner or his designee of the La. Public Service Commission.

Proposed law requires the commission hold its first meeting not later than Jan. 1, 2027, select a chairman from among its membership, and adopt rules of procedure, a work schedule, and any additional measures that it deems necessary for the timely performance of its duties. Requires the members of the commission serve without compensation, and any vacancy in the membership be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. Requires a majority of the members constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Specifies the commission will be domiciled in Shreveport, La. but may hold meetings elsewhere in the state.

Proposed law requires the commission meet biannually or as often as the chairman of the board convenes it, or on written request of any member.

Proposed law requires the commission's study include the following:

- (1) Identify what railroads and associated structures require remediation or removal.
- (2) Create a procedure for assessing and classifying the various conditions of the railroads and associated structures pursuant to federal law.
- (3) Create a procedure for providing notice to railroad companies of the inadequate condition of their railroads.

- (4) Maintain, inspect, and retain records to ensure railroads meet the minimum conditions and standards for its designated class.

Proposed law requires the commission submit a written report of its findings and recommendations relative to all of the study requirements provided in proposed law and any other matters related to railroad accountability that it deems appropriate to the House and Senate transportation committees not later than July 1, 2027.

Proposed law requires railroad companies remediate or remove any existing blighted or abandoned railroads and associated structures in Shreveport, not later than Jan. 1, 2027. Requires underpasses of railroad crossings within Shreveport be maintained and preserved, including but not limited to painting and rust removal, to prevent them from becoming a blight or nuisance.

(Adds R.S. 33:9131 and R.S. 48:390.2)