

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 488

BY REPRESENTATIVE BRAUD

TAX/SEVERANCE TAX: Establishes the Belle Chasse Bridge Merit-Based Special Fund and provides for use of the monies in the fund

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 47:645(B)(2) and to enact R.S. 48:250.4.4, relative to special  
3 treasury funds; to establish the Belle Chasse Bridge Merit-Based Special Fund; to  
4 provide for the transfer, deposit, and use, of monies in the Belle Chasse Bridge  
5 Merit-Based Special Fund; to provide for dedication of certain severance tax  
6 collections to the Belle Chasse Bridge Merit-Based Special Fund; to provide for an  
7 effective date; and to provide for related matters.

8 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

9 Section 1. R.S. 47:645(B)(2) is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

10 §645. Disposition of collections

11 \* \* \*

12 B.

13 \* \* \*

14 (2) The allocated amounts shall not exceed the limits set forth in Article VII,  
15 Section 4 of the Constitution of Louisiana. When these limits have been reached,  
16 there shall be no further allocation, and all additional collections for the year shall  
17 be credited in full to the state treasury except as provided in R.S. 30:88.1 and R.S.  
18 48:250.4.4.

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Section 2. R.S. 48:250.4.4 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

§250.4.4. Belle Chasse Bridge Merit-Based Special Fund

A. There is hereby established in the state treasury, as a special fund, the Belle Chasse Bridge Merit-Based Special Fund, hereinafter referred to as the "fund".

B. After allocation of money to the Bond Security and Redemption Fund as provided in Article VII, Section 9(B) of the Constitution of Louisiana and any other revenues pursuant to the Constitution of Louisiana and the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, the treasurer shall deposit into the fund one-fifth of the portion of recurring severance tax revenues collected in Plaquemines Parish that would otherwise be deposited into the state general fund.

C. The monies in the fund shall be invested in the same manner as monies in the state general fund. Interest earned on the investment of monies in the fund shall be credited to the fund. Unexpended and unencumbered monies in the fund at the end of the fiscal year shall remain in the fund.

D. Monies in the fund shall be appropriated to the Department of Transportation and Development and shall be used exclusively as follows:

- (1) To reduce toll rates on the Belle Chasse Bridge public-private partnership project.
- (2) To pay amounts owed to the developer for exercising the Department of Transportation and Development's early handback option in the Belle Chasse Bridge public-private partnership contract.
- (3) For Department of Transportation and Development projects or improvements within any area identified pursuant to the Belle Chasse Bridge public-private partnership contract for any alternative facility.

Section 3. This Act shall become effective on July 1, 2026; if vetoed by the governor and subsequently approved by the legislature, this Act shall become effective on July 1, 2026, or on the day following such approval by the legislature, whichever is later.

CODING: Words in ~~struck through~~ type are deletions from existing law; words underscored are additions.

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**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)]

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HB 488 Reengrossed

2026 Regular Session

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**Abstract:** Establishes the Belle Chasse Bridge Merit-Based Special Fund (fund) and requires monies in the fund to be used for the Belle Chasse Bridge public-private partnership (P3) project.

Proposed law establishes the fund as a special fund in the state treasury. Provides for deposit, use, and investment of monies in the fund. Requires the state treasurer to annually deposit into the fund an amount equal to one-fifth of the recurring severance tax revenues collected in Plaquemines Parish that otherwise would have been deposited into the state general fund. Provides that monies in the fund be used for the following purposes:

- (1) To reduce toll rates on the Belle Chasse Bridge P3 project.
- (2) To pay amounts owed to the developer for exercising the Dept. of Transportation and Development's (DOTD) early handback option in the Belle Chasse Bridge P3 contract.
- (3) For DOTD projects or improvements within any area identified pursuant to the Belle Chasse Bridge P3 contract for any alternative facility.

Effective July 1, 2026.

(Amends R.S. 47:645(B)(2); Adds R.S. 48:250.4.4)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Appropriations to the original bill:

1. Restrict deposit into the fund to one-fifth of recurring severance tax revenues collected in Plaquemines Parish that otherwise would have been deposited into the state general fund.

The House Floor Amendments to the engrossed bill:

1. Remove authorization to use fund monies to pay any annual consumer price index buy-down payment in the Belle Chasse Bridge P3 contract.
2. Make technical changes.