

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 149

BY SENATOR BARTHELEMY

A RESOLUTION

To direct the Department of Transportation and Development to review and study any potential hazards of the increasing railroad activity on the Norfolk Southern Railway originating at the Alabo Street Wharf.

WHEREAS, Norfolk Southern Railway is a Class I freight railroad operating in the Eastern United States, with key infrastructure that includes approximately a six mile rail bridge on the Lake Pontchartrain Bridge; and

WHEREAS, the Alabo Street Wharf in New Orleans was originally a slaughterhouse that was purchased by the Port of New Orleans to transport river and train cargo, including lumber, copper, and sugar; and

WHEREAS, this rail corridor has been largely dormant for decades; and

WHEREAS, the Port of New Orleans has entered into a fifteen-year lease agreement with Sunrise Foods International to convert the Alabo Street Wharf in the Lower Ninth Ward, Holy Cross, and other St. Bernard Parish neighborhoods into a specialized terminal for importing organic grain, transported by Norfolk Southern trains; and

WHEREAS, in 2026, there were multiple incidents involving Norfolk Southern trains colliding with vehicles and eighteen-wheeler trucks; and

WHEREAS, some tracks run within fifteen feet of the resident's front doors; and

WHEREAS, grain dust is an S-1 high-hazard classified material and can become combustible under certain conditions and poses a potential environmental and safety hazard; and

WHEREAS, R.S. 48:390 authorizes the secretary of the Department of Transportation and Development to complete a study of all public railroad grade crossings to establish priorities for improvement, relocation, or closure in compliance with federal guidelines and requires the development of a prioritized plan for implementing railroad grade crossing improvements, relocations or closures; and

WHEREAS, there is a potential environmental and public safety issue arising out of expansion of rail activity in this area.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby direct the Department of Transportation and Development to review and study any potential hazards with increasing activity on the Norfolk Southern Railway originating at the Alabo Street Wharf, pursuant to R.S. 48:390 et seq.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation and Development shall submit a written report that includes potential ways to prevent any foreseeable harm to the community with detailed findings to the Senate Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works prior to January 1, 2027.

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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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE