

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 358

BY REPRESENTATIVE PHELPS

RAILROADS: Urges and requests the Department of Transportation and Development to communicate with certain railroad companies to address abandoned and blighted railroads

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To urge and request the Department of Transportation and Development, through the
3 department's District 4 commissioner, to engage in communication with certain
4 railroad companies, including but not limited to Kansas City Southern Railway
5 Company and Union Pacific Railroad to address abandoned and blighted railroads
6 and associated structures in certain parishes in Louisiana.

7 WHEREAS, in Northwest Louisiana, the railroad history features several historically
8 significant abandoned lines and corridors, including but not limited to Kansas City Southern
9 Railway Company, Union Pacific Railroad, Texas and Pacific Railway Company, the
10 Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad Company, and the Louisiana and Arkansas
11 Railway; and

12 WHEREAS, abandoned and blighted railroad lines pose significant safety,
13 environmental, and public health hazards; and

14 WHEREAS, rotting timber, protruding spikes, and uneven tracks create severe
15 tripping hazards and can damage car tires or disrupt vehicles at crossing points; and

16 WHEREAS, old wooden railroad ties are heavily treated with creosote, a pesticide
17 and fungicide, that can ooze from the wood and leach into the soil and local watersheds; and

18 WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the public to address abandoned and blighted
19 railroads in the state of Louisiana; and

1 WHEREAS, communication with these railroad commissions can provide a solution
2 to address abandoned and blighted railroads in the parishes of Bienville, Bossier, Caddo,
3 Claiborne, Desoto, Red River, and Webster.

4 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the
5 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Transportation and
6 Development, through the department's District 4 commissioner, to engage in
7 communication and strategize the removal or remediation of certain railroads with the
8 referenced railroad companies to address abandoned and blighted railroads and associated
9 structures in the listed Northwestern Louisiana parishes.

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation and
11 Development, District 4 commissioner, shall consult and communicate with parish or city
12 governing authorities in an effort to resolve the problem with abandoned and blighted
13 railroads.

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Transportation and
15 Development, District 4 commissioner, shall maintain and provide a contact list of the
16 referenced railroad companies to the listed parishes.

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department shall submit a written report to
18 the House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works prior to January 1,
19 2027, that provides details on discussions and the intent of the railroads to resolve the
20 abandoned and blighted railroads and associated structures in the listed Northwestern
21 Louisiana parishes.

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
23 secretary of the Department of Transportation and Development.

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)]

HR 358 Original

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Urges and requests that the Dept. of Transportation and Development (DOTD) engage in communication with the referenced railroad companies to address abandoned and blighted railroads and associated structures in the listed NW La. parishes. Requires DOTD submit a written report detailing discussions and the intent of railroads regarding resolving railroad concerns to the House transportation committee before Jan. 1, 2027.