2023 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 45

BY REPRESENTATIVE DEVILLIER

AGRICULTURE: Creates the Louisiana Solar Siting Task Force to study the impact of, and alternatives to, locating solar energy developments on farmland

1	A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
2	To create the Louisiana Solar Siting Task Force to study the impact of, and alternatives to,
3	locating solar energy developments on farmland.
4	WHEREAS, the United States is now home to more than two million solar
5	photovoltaic developments according to a 2019 announcement by Wood Mackenzie's Power
6	and Renewables industry report and the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA); and
7	WHEREAS, across the United States, farmland is being leased by solar companies
8	for the construction and operation of solar installation and the production of solar energy;
9	and
10	WHEREAS, prime farmland is being taken out of production when it is critical that
11	such land be available for increased production to feed a growing population at home and
12	abroad; and
13	WHEREAS, solar energy development can have tremendous physical impacts,
14	including but not limited to soil compaction due to heavy machinery and disruption of
15	subsurface and surface drainage systems, on the land both during the solar projects lifetime
16	and afterwards; and
17	WHEREAS, a legitimate concern surrounding the development of solar energy is
18	how long-term the physical impacts will last and how successfully the land can convert back
19	to agricultural uses at the end of the solar lease; and

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1	WHEREAS, as the result of economic benefit for one landowner and economic
2	incentives for businesses to create very few jobs, agricultural heritage areas may be subject
3	to negative impacts for future generations; and
4	WHEREAS, unwise siting of solar developments could jeopardize Louisiana's farms,
5	forests, waterways, and wetlands; and
6	WHEREAS, it is appropriate to encourage the responsible siting of solar
7	development projects in Louisiana and to study alternative siting of such projects in areas
8	that will not harm, inhibit, or otherwise adversely impact fertile, prime, or productive farms
9	and fields.
10	THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
11	create the Louisiana Solar Siting Task Force.
12	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Louisiana Solar Siting Task Force shall be
13	comprised of the following members:
14	(1) The commissioner of the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry, or
15	his designee.
16	(2) The secretary of the Department of Natural Resources, or his designee.
17	(3) The secretary of the Department of Economic Development, or his designee.
18	(4) The president of the Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation, or his designee.
19	(5) The president of the Senate, or his designee.
20	(6) The speaker of the House of Representatives, or his designee.
21	(7) The executive director of the Police Jury Association of Louisiana, or his
22	designee.
23	(8) The executive director of the Louisiana Municipal Association, or his designee.
24	(9) The executive secretary of the Louisiana Public Service Commission, or his
25	designee.
26	(10) The president of the Louisiana Landowners Association, Inc., or his designee.
27	(11) The executive director of the Gulf States Renewable Energy Industry
28	Association, or his designee.
29	(12) The president of the Advanced Power Alliance, or his designee.
30	(13) The president of the Center for Planning Excellence, or his designee.

1	(14) The president of the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives, or
2	his designee.
3	(15) A representative of the Louisiana Energy and Power Authority.
4	(16) The president of the Natural Resources Management Association, or his
5	designee.
6	(17) A representative of a privately owned utility regulated by the Louisiana
7	Public Service Commission.
8	(18) A representative of the investor owned utility regulated by the Louisiana
9	Public Service Commission and the City Council of New Orleans.
10	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall study the impact of, and
11	alternatives to, the locating of solar panels on farmland.
12	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Natural Resources shall
13	provide staffing support for the task force.
14	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall convene its first meeting no
15	later than November 1, 2023, shall elect a chairperson from among its members at its first
16	meeting, and shall submit a written report of its findings and any recommendations for
17	legislation or regulations to the speaker of the House of Representatives and the president
18	of the Senate no later than February 1, 2024.
19	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ten members of the task force shall constitute
20	a quorum sufficient to conduct meetings and business of the task force and its members shall
21	serve without compensation, except per diem or expense reimbursement to which they may
22	be individually entitled as members of their constituent organizations.
23	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that legislative authority for the task force shall
24	terminate on July 1, 2024.
25	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted
26	to the commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, the secretary of the
27	Department of Natural Resources, the secretary of the Department of Economic
28	Development, the president of the Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation, the executive director
29	of the Police Jury Association of Louisiana, the executive director of the Louisiana
30	Municipal Association, the executive secretary of the Louisiana Public Service Commission,

the president of the Louisiana Landowners Association, the executive director of the Gulf States Renewable Energy Industry Association, the president of the Advanced Power Alliance, the president of the Center for Planning Excellence, the president of the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives, the general manager of the Louisiana Energy and Power Authority, the president of the Natural Resources Management Association, the chairman of the Louisiana Public Service Commission, and executive counsel of the City Council of New Orleans.

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)]

HCR 45 Engrossed

2023 Regular Session

DeVillier

Creates the La. Solar Siting Task Force to study the impact of, and alternatives to, locating solar energy developments on farmland. Provides for the composition of the task force, structure, meeting requirements, and quorum. Requires the task force submit a written report of its findings to the legislature by Feb. 1, 2024.

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by <u>House Committee on Agriculture, Forestry,</u> <u>Aquaculture, and Rural Development to the original bill:</u>

- 1. Add the following members to the task force: the president of the Advanced Power Alliance, or his designee; the president of the Center for Planning Excellence, or his designee; the president of the Association of La. Electric Cooperatives, or his designee; a representative of the La. Energy and Power Authority; the president of the Natural Resources Management Association, or his designee; a representative of a privately owned utility regulated by the La. Public Service Commission; and a representative of the investor owned utility regulated by the La. Public Service Commission and the City Counsel of New Orleans.
- 2. Change the quorum <u>from</u> six <u>to</u> 10 members.
- 3. Add an exception to the compensation of members relating to per diem or expense reimbursements that the members may be individually entitled to.
- 4. Make technical changes.
- 5. Require the members who were added to the task force receive a copy of this Resolution.