
DIGEST

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St. Germain

HB No. 1212

Abstract: Authorizes an election to be held in the parishes of Jefferson, Orleans, and Plaquemines on the question of whether tolls shall be collected on the Crescent City Connection Bridge. The bill provides that the DOTD shall collect the tolls and operate and maintain the bridge.

Proposed law provides that an election shall be held in the parishes of Jefferson, Orleans, and Plaquemines for the purpose of determining whether tolls shall be collected on the Crescent City Connection Bridge. Proposed law provides for the ballot language, which provides for the rate of the tolls to be collected and the uses of the toll revenue.

Proposed law provides that upon a majority of the qualified electorate approving the collection of tolls, the tolls shall be collected at the present law rates. Proposed law maintains all present law manners of toll collection and enforcement of toll violations.

Proposed law provides for the creation of the "Crescent City Connection Toll Fund", as follows:

- (1) Monies for the fund shall be tolls collected for passage over the Crescent City Connection Bridge, and any administrative fees, and any late charges.
- (2) After compliance with the requirements of Article VII, Section 9(B) of the Constitution of Louisiana, relative to the Bond Security and Redemption Fund, an amount equal to that deposited into the state treasury from the foregoing sources shall be deposited in and credited to the fund. The monies in the fund shall be invested by the treasurer in the same manner as the state general fund, and interest earnings shall be deposited into the fund. All unexpended and unencumbered monies remaining in the fund at the end of each fiscal year shall remain in the fund.
- (3) Monies in the fund shall be subject to annual appropriation by the legislature for use by the Department of Transportation and Development and the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, public safety services.
- (4) Monies in the fund shall be allocated and disbursed by the Department of Public Safety and Corrections, public safety services, for police functions along the span of the bridge.
- (5) Monies in the fund shall be allocated and disbursed by the secretary of the Department of Transportation and Development solely for operations, maintenance, landscaping, grass

cutting, trash pick up, functional and ornamental lighting, and capital projects capital projects on ingress and egress points to the Crescent City Connection Bridge along US 90 from Broad Street to Nine Mile Point Road. No more than a stated percent shall be allocated or disbursed by the secretary of the Department of Transportation and Development for operations in any one fiscal year.

Proposed law provides that New Orleans Regional Planning commission shall serve as an advisory body for the collection of tolls. Proposed law provides that the commission shall have access to the accounting of all expenditures, revenues, project priorities, status of on-going projects, and any other matters which relate to the Crescent City Connection, its operations, and related projects.

Proposed law provides for the authorization to privatize the operations and maintenance of and toll collections on the Crescent City Connection Bridge as follows:

- (1) Authorizes the department to enter into contracts with public or non-public entities for the collection of tolls, operations, or maintenance, or all of the aforementioned activities, on the Crescent City Connection Bridge.
- (2) Requires the department to hold at least one public meeting in the New Orleans metropolitan area and issue a request for information at least ninety days prior to issuing any request for proposal. The purpose of the public meeting and request for information shall be to receive input from the public on how the collection of tolls, operations, or maintenance on the Crescent City Connection Bridge shall be conducted.
- (3) Any requests for proposal issued pursuant to proposed law shall indicate the relative importance of price and other evaluation factors and shall state the criteria to be used in evaluating any proposal.
- (4) Adequate public notice of any requests for proposals shall be given by advertising in the official journal of the state and the official journals of the parishes of Orleans, Jefferson, and Plaquemines, at least once. The first advertisement in each of the listed journals shall appear at least thirty days before the last day that proposals will be accepted. In addition, written notice may be provided to persons, firms, or corporations who are known to be in a position to furnish such service requested at least thirty days prior to the last day that any proposals will be accepted.
- (5) The department shall determine which proposal for a desired service is the most advantageous to the state which meets all the qualitative restrictions established in any requests for proposal.
- (6) All contracts have to be pre-approved by the Joint Legislative Committee on the Budget.
- (7) The department is authorized to monitor the operations and services provided to the department by a public or non-public entity issued a contract. The Joint Legislative

Committee on the Budget, the Senate Committee on Transportation, Highways, and Public Works, and the House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works shall exercise continuous oversight over any services provided by a public or non-public entity issued a contract.

- (8) Requires the department to give updates on its efforts to privatize the operations and maintenance of the Crescent City Connection Bridge upon request of the Senate Committee on Transportation, Highways, and Public Works or the House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works, or both.
- (9) Provides that the proposed law shall be null, void, and of no effect on July 1, 2014, should the department have not awarded a contract or contracts for Crescent City Connection Bridge toll collection, operation, and maintenance.

Proposed law provides that Should the Crescent City Connection ferries not be privatized, then the department shall use best practices and establish and collect fares as follows:

- (1) A commuter fare for pedestrians of not less than one dollar per each passage.
- (2) A commuter pass for motor vehicle commuters not less than four dollars per each passage.
- (3) A tourist rate or non-commuter rate may be set by the department under the direction of the New Orleans Regional Planning

Proposed law provides that all fares collected pursuant to proposed law shall be used solely for ferry operations formerly operated by the Crescent City Connection Division of the Department of Transportation and Development.

Proposed law provides that DOTD is authorized to adjust the fares charged pursuant to proposed law annually in accordance with increases in the Consumer Price Index.

Sections 1, 4, and 5 effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

Sections 2 and 3 effective January 1, 2013, 12:01 a.m., should the election provided for in Section 1 of this Act results in the collection of tolls on the Crescent City Connection Bridge.

(Adds R.S. 47:820.5.8 and 7011-7016 and R.S. 48:954)