

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 90

BY REPRESENTATIVE FOIL

CONSTITUTION/CONVENTION: Creates a commission to study the feasibility of a constitutional convention and make recommendations relative thereto

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

2 To create and establish the Constitutional Convention Study Commission to undertake all
3 necessary study to examine the feasibility and advisability of calling a convention
4 to revise the Constitution of Louisiana and, if a convention is found to be feasible
5 and advisable, to make recommendations to the legislature for calling such a
6 convention, including a plan for the conduct of an effective constitutional
7 convention.

8 WHEREAS, at twelve midnight on December 31, 1974, the Constitution of the state
9 of Louisiana of 1974 became effective, culminating a remarkable effort to provide the state
10 with a completely new constitution that today is recognized as having made landmark
11 changes; namely, shortening the state's constitution from two hundred fifty-five thousand
12 words to a mere thirty-five thousand words, providing for a dramatic reorganization of the
13 executive branch of state government, making very significant changes in local government,
14 and in home rule government in particular, taking steps to strengthen the legislature, and
15 removing many detailed provisions which had precluded legislative action without an
16 accompanying constitutional amendment; and

17 WHEREAS, in the ensuing forty-one years, however, the constitution has been
18 amended one hundred eighty-one times, and as a result, today the document contains not
19 only the problematic provisions which the 1973 convention found itself unable or unwilling
20 to address but additional provisions that protect narrow interests from legislative action

1 despite changing times and needs and that tie the hands of the legislature in its efforts to
2 effect significant reforms; and

3 WHEREAS, various authorities have suggested the need for Louisiana to address a
4 number of policy areas that would require constitutional change, including such matters as
5 the state's tax structure and budgetary practices, dedication of state revenues and the
6 resulting inability of the legislature to allocate tax resources where needed, as well as fiscal
7 restraints on local governments that dramatically limit their authority to meet fiscal and
8 budgetary demands; and

9 WHEREAS, as was the case in 1973, Louisiana once again faces the need for a
10 serious analysis of its basic law, and it must determine whether a constitutional convention
11 is needed and would be the most effective approach to: conducting a genuine examination
12 of the state's critical needs, undertaking an in-depth discussion of reform concepts, crafting
13 provisions that allow for flexibility and innovation in legislative solutions to problems of the
14 present and the future, and challenging Louisiana's voters to accept constructive change; and

15 WHEREAS, prior to calling a constitutional convention, it would be wise to
16 undertake appropriate study and analysis to enable effective decisions concerning details of
17 convention composition, organization, procedure, staffing, and other resources.

18 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
19 create and establish the Constitutional Convention Study Commission to undertake all study
20 and analysis necessary for a complete examination of the feasibility and advisability of
21 calling a constitutional convention to revise the Constitution of Louisiana and, if a
22 convention is found to be feasible and advisable, to make recommendations to the legislature
23 for calling such a convention.

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall be composed of thirteen
25 members as follows:

26 (1) Two members of the Louisiana House of Representatives appointed by the
27 speaker of the House of Representatives.

28 (2) Two members of the Louisiana Senate appointed by the president of the Senate.

29 (3) Two members appointed by the governor.

30 (4) Two members appointed by the chief justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court.

1 (5)(a)(i) A representative of the Louisiana State University Paul M. Hebert Law
2 Center appointed by the chancellor of the law center.

3 (ii) A representative of the Louisiana State University E. J. Ourso College of
4 Business appointed by the dean of the business college.

5 (iii) A representative of the Southern University Law Center appointed by the
6 chancellor of the law center.

7 (iv) A representative of the Southern University College of Business appointed by
8 the dean of the business college.

9 (b) If the appointing authorities do not make an appointment as provided in
10 Subparagraph (a) of this Paragraph, the speaker of the House of Representatives and the
11 president of the Senate shall make any appointment necessary to provide for such required
12 membership, giving consideration to any recommendations of the appointing authorities.

13 (6) A representative of the Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana appointed
14 by the council.

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in making appointments to the commission, the
16 appointing authorities shall seek to provide diversity in the commission's membership,
17 including diversity of geography, race, and gender.

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a vacancy in commission membership shall be
19 filled in the manner of the original appointment.

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall hold its organizational
21 meeting within sixty days after adjournment sine die of the 2015 Regular Session of the
22 Legislature on the call of the speaker of the House of Representatives and the president of
23 the Senate acting jointly and that at such organizational meeting the commission shall elect
24 a chairman, a vice chairman, and such other officers as it finds necessary and shall adopt
25 rules for its own procedure which shall be subject to later amendment by the commission.

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall make such studies as it
27 finds necessary or appropriate to determine the feasibility and advisability of calling a
28 convention to revise the Constitution of Louisiana and, if a convention is found to be feasible
29 and advisable, to make recommendations to the legislature on all matters relevant to the

1 convening and conduct of a constitutional convention, including a plan for the conduct of
2 an effective constitutional convention, which plan shall include but not be limited to:

3 (1) A policy agenda for the convention which shall include:

4 (a) Identification of significant policy areas that must be addressed in order to
5 propose a constitution that will serve the state effectively.

6 (b) Alternative proposals for provisions on significant policy areas, together with
7 explanations and explanatory materials therefor, including multiple optional approaches and
8 solutions as appropriate to facilitate the work of the convention in addressing issues.

9 (c) Pertinent background material and data relative to significant policy areas.

10 (2) Background and other materials that the committee determines will be useful to
11 the work of the convention.

12 (3) Proposals for elimination of statutory materials from the constitution, together
13 with recommendations for legislative action relative thereto.

14 (4) Recommendations for convention organization and deliberations, including the
15 composition of the membership of the convention, officers and committees, and significant
16 provisions for rules of procedure.

17 (5) Timetables for convening, for staff work, for completion of a draft constitution,
18 for the election to submit the proposal to the voters of the state, and for effectiveness of the
19 new constitution.

20 (6) An analysis of staffing and other resources needed and available to address
21 policy issues and to skillfully draft constitutional language.

22 (7) Recommendations for budget needs for effective conduct of a convention.

23 (8) Recommendations for procedures for submission of alternative proposals to the
24 voters and ballot structure.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall complete its study and
26 determine its recommendations to the legislature no later than January 15, 2016, and shall
27 submit to each member of the legislature and to the governor, no later than February 14,
28 2016, the complete results of its study and a report of its findings and its recommendations
29 based thereon.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission, for the purposes of conducting
2 the study as provided in this Resolution, may utilize the personnel, facilities, and services
3 of the legislative auditor, the legislative fiscal officer, and the staffs of the House of
4 Representatives and the Senate, and that the commission may request and utilize such
5 counsel, assistance, personnel, facilities, and advice as may be obtained from any and all
6 public sources and from any and all private sources, including but not necessarily restricted
7 to private research agencies, individuals, and organizations.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the speaker of the House of Representatives and
9 the president of the Senate may each assign one or more employees whose full-time duties
10 and responsibilities shall be providing staff support to the commission; that the legislative
11 fiscal officer shall assign one employee whose full-time duty and responsibility shall be
12 providing staff support to the commission; that the director of the Louisiana State Law
13 Institute shall assign one employee whose half-time duty and responsibility shall be
14 providing staff support to the commission; that the chief justice of the Louisiana Supreme
15 Court shall assign one employee whose half-time duty and responsibility shall be providing
16 staff support to the commission; and that each university that appoints a member to the
17 commission shall assign one employee whose half-time duty and responsibility shall be
18 providing staff support to the commission.

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission may make or cause to be made
20 any studies it finds useful for the purposes of this Resolution through legislative personnel
21 or in cooperation with any public or private agency, including but not limited to universities,
22 colleges, foundations, charitable corporations, and research organizations, and the
23 commission may call upon the members or staffs of any and all departments or agencies of
24 the state for data and assistance, and all such departments and agencies shall cooperate with
25 the commission.

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission may receive grants, donations,
27 or gifts of money or services from public or private organizations or from any other source,
28 to be utilized for the purposes of the commission.

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission may create or appoint advisory
2 commissions or task forces to act in an advisory capacity or to assist in its studies, composed
3 of such representatives of the public or private sectors as it deems appropriate.

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all expenses directly incurred by the commission
5 may be paid from any funds available for the purpose and, with the approval of the presiding
6 officers of the two houses of the Legislature of Louisiana, from funds available to such
7 presiding officers for expenses of the legislature.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission shall be deemed dissolved upon
9 the adjournment sine die of the 2016 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

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 90 Engrossed

2015 Regular Session

Foil

Proposed concurrent resolution creates the Constitutional Convention Study Commission to make necessary studies and analysis to examine the feasibility and advisability of calling a constitutional convention to revise the Constitution of La.

- (1) Provides that the commission be composed of 13 members as follows:
- (a) Two members of the La. House of Representatives appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives.
 - (b) Two members of the La. Senate appointed by the president of the Senate.
 - (c) Two members appointed by the governor.
 - (d) Two members appointed by the chief justice of the La. Supreme Court.
 - (e) A representative of the LSU Paul M. Hebert Law Center appointed by the chancellor of the law center.
 - (f) A representative of the LSU E. J. Ourso College of Business appointed by the dean of the business college.
 - (g) A representative of the Southern University Law Center appointed by the chancellor of the law center.
 - (h) A representative of the Southern University College of Business appointed by the dean of the business college.
 - (i) A representative of the Public Affairs Research Council of La. appointed by the council.

Provides that if the appointing authorities provided for in (e) through (h) above do not make an appointment as provided, the House speaker and the Senate president

shall make any appointment necessary to provide for such required membership, giving consideration to any recommendations of the appointing authorities.

Requires that, in making appointments, the appointing authorities shall seek to provide diversity in the commission's membership, including diversity of geography, race, and gender.

Provides for filling of a vacancy in the manner of the original appointment.

- (2) Requires that the commission hold its organizational meeting within 60 days after adjournment sine die of the 2015 R.S. on the call of the House speaker and the Senate president acting jointly.

Requires the commission, at the organizational meeting, to elect a chairman, a vice chairman, and other officers it finds necessary and to adopt rules for its own procedure.

- (3) Requires the commission to make such studies as it finds necessary or appropriate to determine the feasibility and advisability of calling a constitutional convention to revise the state constitution and, if a convention is found to be feasible and advisable, to make recommendations to the legislature on all matters relevant to the convening and conduct of a constitutional convention including a plan for the conduct of an effective constitutional convention which plan shall include but not be limited to:

- (a) A policy agenda for the convention which shall include:
 - (i) Identification of significant policy areas that must be addressed in order to propose a constitution that will serve the state effectively.
 - (ii) Alternative proposals for provisions on significant policy areas, together with explanations and explanatory materials therefor, including multiple optional approaches and solutions as appropriate to facilitate the work of the convention in addressing issues.
 - (iii) Pertinent background material and data relative to significant policy areas.
- (b) Background and other materials that the committee determines will be useful to the work of the convention.
- (c) Proposals for elimination of statutory materials from the constitution, together with recommendations for legislative action relative thereto.
- (d) Recommendations for convention organization and deliberations, including the composition of the membership of the convention, officers and committees, and significant provisions for rules of procedure.
- (e) Timetables for convening, for staff work, for completion of a draft constitution, for the election to submit the proposal to the voters of the state, and for effectiveness of the new constitution.
- (f) An analysis of staffing and other resources needed and available to address policy issues and to skillfully draft constitutional language.
- (g) Recommendations for budget needs for effective conduct of a convention.
- (h) Recommendations for procedures for submission of alternative proposals to the voters and ballot structure.

- (4) Requires the commission to complete its study and determine its recommendations by Jan. 15, 2016, and by Feb. 14, 2016, to submit study results and a report of its findings and recommendations to each legislator and the governor.

- (5) Authorizes the commission to utilize the personnel, facilities, and services of the legislative auditor, the legislative fiscal officer, and the staffs of the House of Representatives and the Senate and to request and use such counsel, assistance, personnel, facilities, and advice as may be obtained from any and all public or private sources.

- (6) Authorizes the House speaker and the Senate president to each assign one or more full-time staff persons to provide staff support to the commission.
- (7) Requires that each of the following assign employees as follows to provide staff support to the commission:

<u>Assigned by</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Full-time/ Half-time</u>
Legislative fiscal officer	One	Full-time
Director of the La. State Law Institute	One	Half-time
Chief justice of the La. Supreme Court	One	Half-time
Each university that appoints a member to the commission	One	Half-time

- (8) Authorizes the commission to make, or cause to be made, studies useful to its purposes through legislative personnel or in cooperation with any public or private agency and to call upon departments or agencies of the state for data and assistance. Requires departments and agencies to cooperate with the commission.
- (9) Authorizes the commission to receive grants, donations, or gifts of money or services from public or private organizations or from any other sources and to create or appoint advisory commissions or task forces for advice or assistance, composed of representatives of the public or private sectors.
- (10) Provides that expenses directly incurred by the commission may be paid from any funds available for the purpose and, with the approval of the legislative presiding officers, from funds available to such presiding officers for expenses of the legislature.
- (11) Provides that the commission shall be dissolved upon the adjournment sine die of the 2016 R.S.