

RESOLUTION 4

To recommend increasing revenue through special permit fees for the commercial trucking industry as a bondable means of financing for a statewide bridge improvement program.

WHEREAS, bridge conditions in Louisiana are such that more than 220 bridges are currently closed, over 1,000 bridges have load-posted weight limits, more than 750 bridges have exceeded their useful life of 50 years, and nearly 2,500 hundred bridges still have timber components; and

WHEREAS, without additional revenue to fund a bridge improvement program in Louisiana, additional bridges will continue to be closed and weight restricted, at an accelerating rate, disrupting commerce through lengthy detour routes in both urban and rural areas; and

WHEREAS, special permit fees for the commercial trucking industry were identified by attendees of regional meetings as a means of increasing revenue for transportation infrastructure in Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force has determined that existing special permits fees for the commercial trucking industry provide for inequity with respect to specific commodities and do not correlate with impacts to the transportation system; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force has determined establishing special permit fees for the commercial trucking industry based on impact to the transportation system rather than with respect to the commodity being transported to be sound public policy; and

WHEREAS, such revisions to the existing fee structure would have commercial trucks with more impact to the transportation system invest more than those with less impact; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force has determined the use of additional revenue from special permit fees for a bondable bridge improvement program that targets all 64 parishes to be appropriate, as bridges in rural areas are particularly susceptible to impacts from heavy loads that can result in closure or weight restrictions that impede commerce; and

WHEREAS, revisions to the existing fee structure could increase additional revenue to justify increasing the diesel tax a rate lower than the gasoline tax; and

WHEREAS, under the existing fee structure, special permits for the commercial trucking industry generate approximately \$25 million annually; and

WHEREAS, comprehensive special permit reform was last performed in 1977, and the existing permit and fee structure is the result of seventy-five changes to the law over the last forty years; and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Legislature established the Special Permit Task Force through House Concurrent Resolution 105 of the 2016 Regular Legislative Session to study and recommend changes to simplify, consolidate, adjust fees, create efficiencies, and improve the use of technology related to special permits by February 1, 2017.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Governor's Task Force on Transportation Infrastructure Investment does hereby recommend increasing revenue through special permit fees for the commercial trucking industry as a bondable means of financing for a statewide bridge improvement program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that revisions to the existing fee structure should increase additional revenue to justify increasing the diesel tax at an appropriate rate lower than the gasoline tax; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that increases in special permit fees for the commercial trucking industry should provide equity and ensure that commercial trucks with more impact to the transportation system invest more than those with less impact; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, to the extent its recommendation increases sufficient revenue in a manner that provides equity and ensures commercial trucks with more impact to the transportation system invest more than those with less impact, the Task Force defers to the findings and recommendations of the Special Permit Task Force created by House Concurrent Resolution 105 of the 2016 Regular Legislative which is due by February 1, 2017; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, a copy of this resolution and additional information supporting the findings contained herein shall be included in the submission to the Governor by January 1, 2017.

Co-Chair, Secretary Shawn D. Wilson, Ph.D.

Co-Chair, Gen. John Basilica

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