

2024 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 3

BY REPRESENTATIVE ZERINGUE

JUDGES: Provides for the continuation of the Judicial Structure Task Force as established by House Resolution No. 30 of the 2022 Regular Session

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To continue and reestablish the Judicial Structure Task Force created by House Resolution
3 No. 30 of the 2022 Regular Session of the Legislature of Louisiana.

4 WHEREAS, the Judicial Structure Task Force was created in the 2022 Regular
5 Session pursuant to House Resolution No. 30 to study the caseload data and the number of
6 judges of each appellate court and district court in Louisiana, to determine changes necessary
7 to the existing structure of the judiciary, and to provide the most efficient use of judicial
8 resources; and

9 WHEREAS, House Concurrent Resolution No. 143 of the 2011 Regular Session of
10 the Louisiana Legislature requested the supreme court to study the structure of the judiciary;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, the task force has met twelve times since its inception to determine the
13 efficient methodology and approach for the district courts weighted caseload study; and

14 WHEREAS, the National Center for State Courts developed a work point study to
15 assess the workload of district and appellate courts throughout the state; and

16 WHEREAS, an updated work point study is needed to accurately assess the structure
17 and workload of the judiciary; and

18 WHEREAS, the release of the detailed 2020 federal decennial census data on August
19 12, 2021, revealed serious population losses in some parts of the state and tremendous
20 population growth in other parts of the state; and

1 WHEREAS, as population shifts from some areas of this state to others, it would be
2 prudent to examine the caseload data from each court in the state of Louisiana to determine
3 if the judicial resources are being used in the most efficient manner possible; and

4 WHEREAS, population and demographic changes in the state of Louisiana provide
5 a reassessment opportunity to determine if reallocation of judicial resources may be needed;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, it is utmost importance to consider the case filing data, case weights,
8 court structure and finance, and the use of support personnel in order to establish proper
9 funding and distribution of such funds to the courts; and

10 WHEREAS, the legislature will be unable to appropriate such funds as are necessary
11 for the judicial system without receiving proper and sufficient data to support such an
12 appropriation; and

13 WHEREAS, it is also necessary to study the territorial boundaries and the
14 jurisdictional limits of each court.

15 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the
16 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby continue the Judicial Structure Task Force to study the
17 caseload data and the number of judges of each appellate court and district court in
18 Louisiana, and to determine the changes necessary to the existing structure of the judiciary
19 and the most efficient use of judicial resources.

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall be composed of the
21 following members:

22 (1) Three members of the House Committee on Appropriations appointed by the
23 speaker of the House of Representatives.

24 (2) Three members of the House Committee on Judiciary appointed by the speaker
25 of the House of Representatives.

26 (3) One member of the House of Representatives appointed by the speaker of the
27 House of Representatives.

28 (4) The chief justice of the Supreme Court, or his designee.

29 (5) The chair of the Louisiana Conference of Court of Appeals Judges, or his
30 designee.

1 (6) Two judges, at least one of whom serves in a judicial district composed of two
2 or more parishes, who are members of the Louisiana District Judges Association selected
3 by the president of the association.

4 (7) One member of the Senate and one judge appointed by the president of the
5 Senate.

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that for purposes of this study, the task force shall
7 have all powers otherwise provided by law and by rules of the House of Representatives, as
8 well as all powers inherent in legislative committees, and that the legislative members shall
9 receive the per diem and mileage authorized by law and in accordance with the rules of the
10 member's house of the legislature.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a member of the House of Representatives on
12 the task force designated by the speaker of the House of Representatives shall serve as the
13 chairman of the task force and that the members of the task force shall select any other
14 officers it deems necessary from among its members at the first meeting of task force.

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the chairman of the task force shall cause notice
16 of each meeting of the task force to be provided to the speaker of the House of
17 Representatives, the chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations, and the chairman
18 of the House Committee on Judiciary.

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature
20 of Louisiana further directs the task force to solicit input, information, data,
21 recommendations, and advice from the following persons, agencies, and organizations in
22 connection with the study directed by this Resolution:

23 (1) The Louisiana Supreme Court.

24 (2) The Louisiana District Judges Association.

25 (3) The Louisiana Clerks of Court Association.

26 (4) The Louisiana District Attorneys Association.

27 (5) The office of the state public defender.

28 (6) The Louisiana State Bar Association.

29 (7) The Louisiana Association for Justice.

30 (8) The National Center for State Courts.

1 (9) Louisiana Association of Business & Industry.

2 (10) Louisiana Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

3 (11) Louisiana Association of Defense Counsel.

4 (12) Any persons, agencies, entities, or stakeholders that the joint committee deems
5 necessary to fulfill its purposes.

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force may seek staff assistance and
7 advice from the office of the judicial administrator for the Supreme Court of Louisiana.

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall submit a written report of
9 its findings and recommendations to the House Committee on Appropriations and the House
10 Committee on Judiciary not later than February 1, 2025, and that such recommendations
11 shall include the following:

12 (1) An updated work point study from the National Center for State Courts.

13 (2) Data from the National Center for State Courts on district court work flow.

14 (3) The caseload data of each appellate court and district court in Louisiana.

15 (4) The number of judges in each appellate court and district court in Louisiana.

16 (5) A determination of any necessary changes to the existing structure of the
17 judiciary.

18 (6) A determination of the most efficient use of judicial resources.

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the
20 chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations, the chairman of the House Committee
21 on Judiciary, the chief justice of the supreme court, the chair of the Louisiana Conference
22 of Court of Appeals Judges, and the president of the Louisiana District Judges Association.

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that one print copy and one electronic copy of any
24 report produced pursuant to this Resolution shall be submitted to the David R. Poynter
25 Legislative Research Library as required by R.S. 24:772.

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)]

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Continues and reestablishes the Judicial Structure Task Force to study the caseload data and the number of judges of each appellate court and district court, to determine the changes necessary to the existing structure of the judiciary and the most efficient use of judicial resources, and to report its findings and recommendations to the House Committee on Appropriations and the House Committee on Judiciary no later than Feb. 1, 2025.