

2007 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature

*Louisiana House of Representatives
Prepared by HLS staff, July 2007*

End of an Era

- ❖ Term Limits enacted 12 years ago
 - ◆ Limited legislators to three, 4-year terms
 - ◆ First round of 12+ year legislators affected
- ❖ Forty-eight experienced House Members Out
 - ◆ 15 of 17 House committee chairmen
 - ◆ 9 of 17 House committee vice-chairmen
 - ◆ 42 of 87 men and 6 of 18 women
- ❖ Many More Running for Other Offices
- ❖ Next Term Provides Opportunity for change similar to “Young Turks”

State Budget

 \$29.8 Billion Total State Budget

§ \$15.8 Billion federal dollars

§ Additional \$1.25 Billion state revenues from minerals and income & sales tax growth

§ \$7.8 Billion state construction budget

Supplemental Appropriations

 Spending Cap Lifted for FY 06-07

§ \$1.8 billion expenditure limit increase

§ Spends:

■ \$827 million FY05-06 surplus

■ \$1.34 billion newly recognized state general fund revenues

 Expenditures:

§ \$600 million for roads

§ \$200 million for coastal restoration and protection

§ \$150 million for economic development

Tax Relief



💰 Hurricane Sales Tax Exemption

§ First \$1,500 of purchases of rebuilding-related materials are exempt

💰 Tax Holiday

§ Annual tax holiday first Friday and Saturday in August
§ Purchases up to \$2,500 are exempt from sales tax

💰 "Broadway South"

§ Income tax credits for certain musical and theatrical productions

💰 Private School Tuition Tax Deduction

§ 50% of tuition or up to \$5,000 can be deducted
■ K-12 schooling

💰 Earned Income Credit

§ 3.5% of federal credit

Stelly Plan Modified

💰 Pre-Stelly Income Tax Deductions restored

§ 3-year phase-in plan
§ Immediate \$157 million income tax relief
§ Additional \$190 million by 2009

💰 Retains 2002 "Stelly Plan" reduction of sales tax on necessary items

Pay Raises



Teachers

- § \$2,375 pay increase
- § Reaches Southern average



School Support Workers

- § \$1,000 pay increase



State Employees

- § \$1,500 pay increase



Governor and Elected Officials

- § 35% Pay Raise
- § Governor from \$95,000 to \$135,000
- § Certain other statewide officials from \$85,000 to \$115,000



Judges

- § Incremental raise over three years

Law Enforcement Pay Increases



Correctional Officers and Probation & Parole Officers

- § \$6,000 per year increase



State Troopers

- § \$2,800 per year increase
- § Makes LA troopers the highest paid law enforcement officers in the state



Wildlife and Fisheries Enforcement Agents

- § \$3,000 per year increase



Supplemental Pay

- § \$125 per month increase (from \$300 to \$425)
- § Firemen, Policemen, EMTs

Road Home Comes Home

- ❖ State Commits Surplus
 - ◆ \$1 billion in state funds to chip away at \$2.9 billion gap
 - ◆ Legislators demonstrate commitment to Congress
- ❖ Legislators Conserve Road Home Funds
 - ◆ Costly advertisements pulled
 - ◆ Many resolutions address concerns
- ❖ No Taxes on Road Home Awards
 - ◆ State taxes removed from all Road Home awards

Hurricane Preparedness

- ❖ Money for Coastal Protection
 - ◆ \$200 million appropriated
- ❖ MR-GO to go
 - ◆ Army Corps agrees to Legislators' demands to close Mississippi River Gulf Outlet
- ❖ Levee Districts clarified
 - ◆ Jurisdiction of Southeast Flood Protection Authorities in N.O. clarified

Insurance

❖ Insurance Breaks

- ♦ \$100 million tax incentive for insurance companies
- ♦ \$110 million tax rebate for Citizens' consumers

❖ Abolishes Insurance Rating Commission

❖ Rebuilding Discount on Homeowners Insurance

- ♦ Actuarially-justified discounts for homeowners who meet storm requirements

❖ Establishment of a Policyholder's Bill of Rights

❖ Minimum-Mandatory Auto Insurance to rise

- ♦ From \$10,000 minimum coverage to \$25,000
- ♦ Industry reportedly asking governor to veto



LA Citizens Modified

❖ Changes Citizens Rating Structure in Certain Noncompetitive Markets

- ♦ Charge the higher of the actuarial rate or the rates equal to the top 10 insurers with the greatest total premium

❖ Citizens Insurance Board of Directors

- ♦ 8 Insurance Industry appointees reduced to 5 on a 15-member board

❖ Citizens Policies Assumed by Private Insurers

- ♦ Private insurers participate in a request for proposal process to assume policies written by Citizens



Mandatory Ethics Education

❖ Ethics & Campaign Finance Training

- ❖ Legislators, state-wide elected officials, and public service commissioners
- ❖ 2 hours ethics training and 1 hour campaign finance training beginning in 2008
- ❖ Applies to all other elected officials in 2010
- ❖ 2 hour ethics training applies to all public employees beginning in 2012



Elections



- ❖ Extension of Early Voting Period
 - ◆ Extends early voting period by one day
 - ◆ Period lasts from fourteen days to seven days prior to any scheduled election
- ❖ Election Day Commissioners
 - ◆ \$250 for commissioners-in-charge
 - ◆ \$200 for commissioners trained on the election
 - ◆ \$100 for other commissioners
- ❖ Registrars of Voters
 - ◆ Salary increase based on population of district

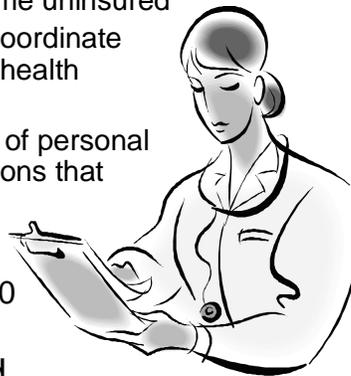
Education

- ❖ \$5.3 billion spent for Education
 - ◆ \$119 million spent on TOPS
 - ◆ First time higher ed. fully funded
 - ◆ \$2.8 billion
- ❖ Truancy
 - ◆ Continues state truancy centers
 - ◆ Achieved 85% student retention rate
- ❖ Teacher-Student Sex Ban
 - ◆ Absolute ban on sex between students and teachers
 - ◆ Raises student age to 18-years-old or under



Health and Hospitals

- ❖ Louisiana Health First
 - ◆ Establishes a health care delivery system for Medicaid recipients and low-income uninsured
 - ◆ Establishes "medical homes" to coordinate care between community clinics, health centers, and doctors
 - ◆ Implements computer monitoring of personal medical history, such as medications that patients receive
- ❖ Children's Healthcare
 - ◆ Healthcare expanded to 10,000 additional children
- ❖ Partial-birth Abortion Banned



Charity Hospitals Reborn

- ❖ Big Charity New Orleans
 - ◆ \$75.4 million committed
 - ◆ Purchase new site
 - ◆ Design and begin engineering for facilities
- ❖ Earl K. Long Charity Baton Rouge
 - ◆ \$15 million committed
 - ◆ Purchase new land
 - ◆ Design additional facilities



Housing & Development

- ❖ Building Code preserved
 - ◆ Inspectors still required
 - ◆ Construction Code Council held in line
 - ◆ Council is prevented from adopting parts of the residential code that are excluded by statute
- ❖ Rent Gouging
 - ◆ Bans rent gouging during emergencies
- ❖ Sex Offenders
 - ◆ Requires state to obtain local approval to house sex offenders



Criminal Justice

- ❖ Indigent Defense
 - ♦ Establishes the State Public Defender Board to provide oversight and standards for delivery of indigent defense services
- ❖ State adopts Adam Walsh Act
 - ♦ National sex offender registry
- ❖ Utility Theft
 - ♦ Establishes crime of utility equipment theft
- ❖ Speedy Trial
 - ♦ Lengthens time before trial
 - ♦ Was 2, now 4 months
- ♦ Increased Penalties for Stalking



Cockfighting Banned

- ❖ Cockfighting bans
 - ♦ As of August 15, 2008, cockfighting will be a crime
 - ♦ As of August 15, 2007, gambling at cockfights will be a crime
- ❖ Preparation for Elimination
 - ♦ One year allowed for disposal of birds and equipment
- ❖ Last State to Ban Cockfighting
 - ♦ Cockfighting now illegal in entire United States



Transportation

- ◆ Highway Backlog reduced
 - ◆ \$14 billion highway backlog
 - ◆ \$600 million committed to reduce backlog
 - ◆ I-49N construction and feasibility study
 - ◆ \$87 million committed
- ◆ Drag Racing drags to Halt
 - ◆ Drag Racing banned

Retirement

- ❖ State Employees and Teachers receive Cost-of-Living adjustment
 - ◆ Authorizes a COLA increase of up to 3.0% for LASERS and teachers
- ❖ Prohibited Nation Investments
 - ◆ Provides for retirement systems to take actions relative to investments in companies with ties to terrorists
- ❖ Constitutional Amendment
 - ◆ Will prohibit addition of new retirement benefits that cannot be paid for in ten years



Natural Resources

- ❖ MR-GO to go
 - ◆ Legislature requests immediate full closure of Mississippi River-Gulf Outlet
 - ◆ Corps announces the closing of MR-GO
- ❖ Lake Peigneur drilling preserved
 - ◆ Oil and Gas exploration and storage still allowed
- ❖ Legislature adopts Master Plan for Coastal Protection and Restoration

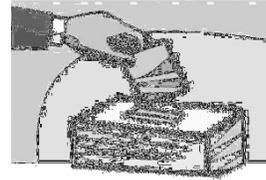


“Of Interest”

- ❖ Ban on Felons with Vicious Dogs
 - ◆ People convicted of felonies are no longer allowed to own a vicious dog
- ❖ Alligator Feeding Preserved
 - ◆ No fines for feeding alligators
- ❖ School Bus Safety Devices Mandated
 - ◆ School buses are now required to have safety arm so bus drivers can see children crossing in front of the bus
- ❖ New Boat Registration
 - ◆ New boats worth more than \$2,500 must be registered with the state; \$20 registration fee

Constitutional Amendments

- Will Exempt Consigned Jewelry from Ad Valorem Taxes
- Will Prohibit Reduction of State Salary Supplements to Law Enforcement and Fire Protection Officers
- Will Require All Increases in Benefits for State Retirement Systems to Also Provide a Funding Source
- Will Authorize Supplemental Pay for Certain Law Enforcement Officials and Fire Protection Officers



**Constitutional
Amendments to
be voted on by
public, October
20, 2007**