



2013 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature



**House Legislative Services
Louisiana House of Representatives
June, 2013**



2013 Regular Session, the numbers

- Odd years are “Limited” Sessions; legislators could file:
 - Unlimited number of fiscal bills
 - Unlimited number of local bills
 - But only 5 general bills
- Session is shorter in duration:
 - Began April 8th and ended June 6th
 - 45 legislative days during 60 calendar days

2013 was a Limited Session



- 991 Total Bills Filed
 - House filed 729 bills
 - Senate filed 262 bills
- 753 Total Resolutions Filed
 - House filed 415 resolutions
 - Senate filed 338 resolutions
- Constitutional amendments
 - 54 constitutional amendments filed
 - 8 will be submitted to the voters

House and Senate Instruments



Appropriation Bill for FY 13-14



Funding for Fiscal Year 2013 -2014

- \$25.4B state budget, comprised of the following sources of revenue:
 - \$10.5B in federal funds;
 - \$7.78B in state general funds;
 - \$1.66B interagency transfers;
 - \$2.1B in fees and self-generated revenues; and
 - \$3.3B in statutory dedications.

Budget Shortfalls

- Addressed a \$165M deficit in FY 12-13.
- Addressed a \$1.2B state general fund shortfall for FY 13-14.
- Decreased total spending by \$ 1.3B.

Issues Raised

- One-time money.
- Contingent funding.
- “Voucher” funding.
- MFP for public K-12 funding.
- The “Rainy Day” Fund.
- Budgetary reform.

The General Appropriation Bill, a “Balancing Act”

One-time Money, Contingencies, and Reform

- Matched nearly all of the one-time money remaining in HB 1 with one-time expenses.
- Eliminated “contingencies”.
- Eliminated sweep of \$100M in cash from the New Orleans Convention Bureau.
- Enacted Budgetary Reform measures.

Additional Funding

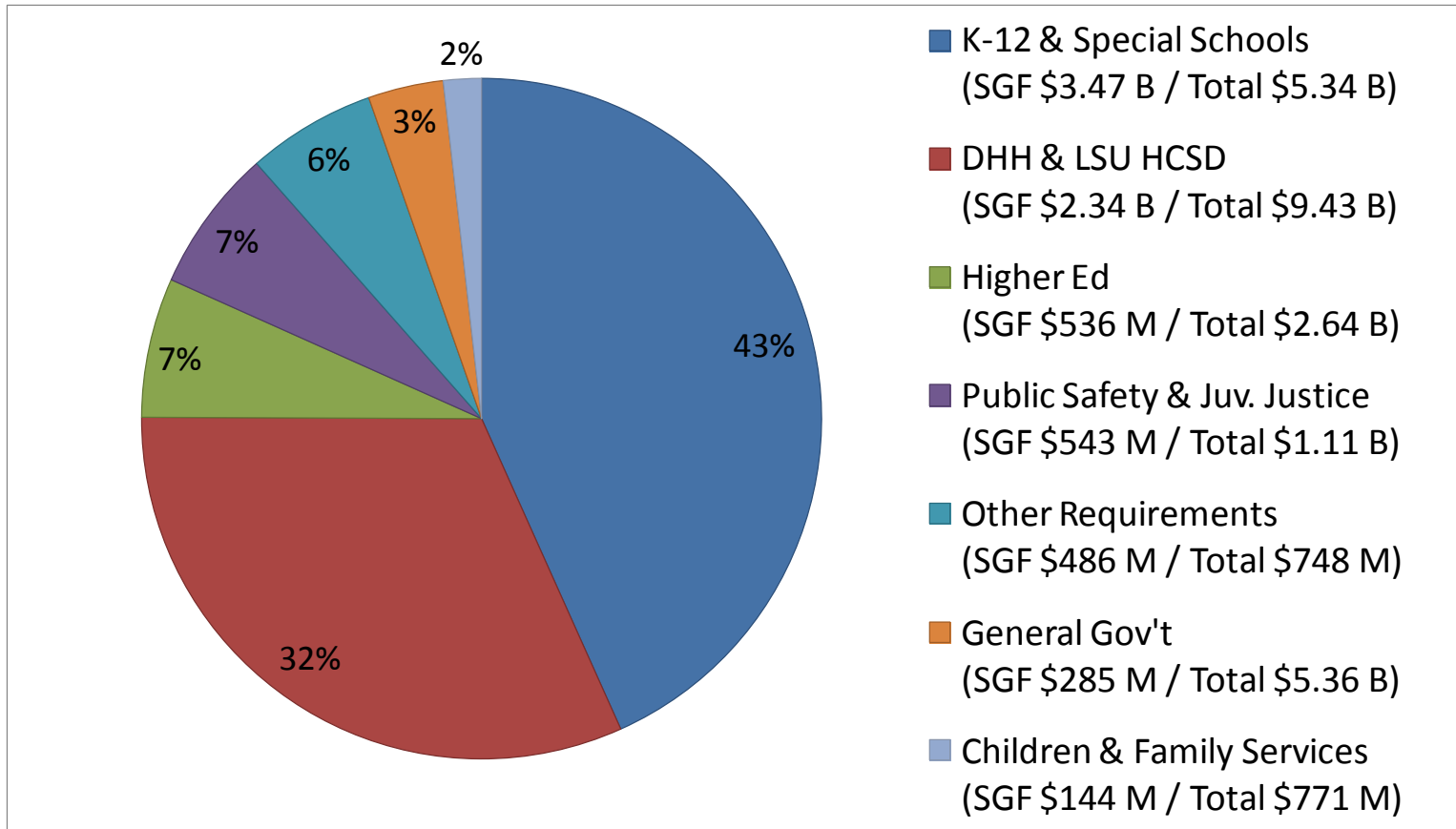
- \$69M in additional funding for public schools, half of which can be used for pay raises for certificated classroom teachers, and \$20M for the Students Scholarship for Excellence Program, i.e. “vouchers”.
- \$75M for private-public hospital partnerships and \$24M in termination pay for former hospital employees.
- \$51.5M for higher education.
- \$12M for judgments for finalized lawsuits against the state.
- \$3.8M for local housing of state adult offenders.

Replacement Revenue, Cuts, and Efficiencies

- HB 571 tightens the Enterprise Zone tax credit, increasing revenue by \$4M.
- HB 705 phases out state solar and wind green energy tax credits increasing revenue by \$2M for FY 14.
- HB 653 reduces vendor compensation paid to those who collect state sales tax, generating \$4.3M.
- HB 456 establishes another state tax amnesty program that is expected to raise \$200M.
- \$22M in cuts to state travel budgets, non-funding of vacant positions, contracts, and curtailing new spending.
- Tobacco money refinancing resulting in \$66.7M.
- Additional revenue recognized by REC: \$129M for this year and \$155M for next year budget.

State General Fund (SGF) Allocation

FY 2013-2014



NOTE: The dollar figures above do not include a \$20 Million SGF reduction mandated by the preamble in HB 1, which reductions are to be allocated by the Commissioner of Administration.

Closing out Current Fiscal Year



Original Bill to Close out the FY 12-13

As HB 678 left the House, it provided supplemental funding and budgetary adjustments for the current fiscal year, namely adjustments to correctional facilities.

The \$113M end of fiscal year surplus was earmarked to repay the state's "Rainy Day Fund" which was used to address previous years' budget deficits.

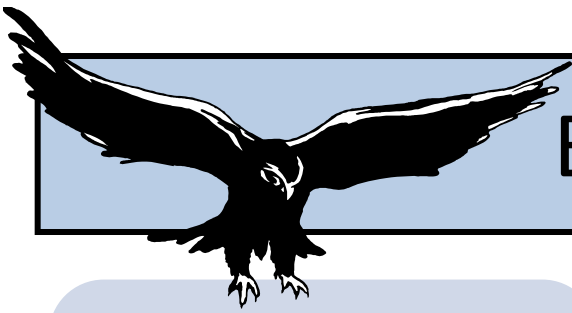
Bill Changed to Address Shortfalls

\$94M to fill the current year's health care budget holes caused by loss of FMAP funds.

\$ 24M to the current year's private school voucher program and \$18.3M to the current year's MFP to reimburse the locals as a result of a court ruling regarding the permissible use of MFP funds.

\$16M increase in student counts.

\$93M in hospital lease payments from private providers to cover cost of current year's holes in funding privatization of the state's public hospitals.



Budgetary Reform Measures

A Reduced Expenditure Limit

HCR 6 reduces the expenditure limit for FY 2013-2014 from \$15,686,646,424 to \$12,916,140,954 which serves to reduce the total amount of funds which can be appropriated in any given year.

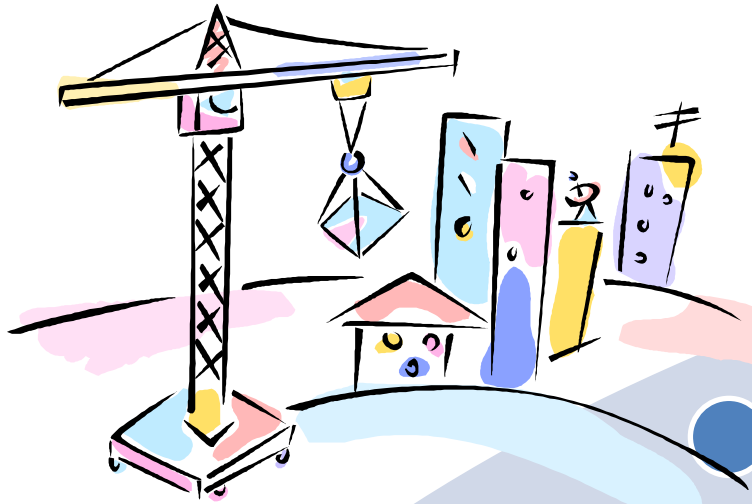
Tighter Requirements on Revenue Estimating Conference

HB 437 requires the REC to recognize ALL sources of funds; limits appropriation to only those funds that are part of official forecast; prohibits Governor's budget from containing contingencies or nonrecurring revenue except as authorized in the constitution.

Budgeting Separately for Discretionary and Nondiscretionary

HB 620 requires the general appropriation bill be introduced with separate recommendations for discretionary and nondiscretionary spending if the Legislative Fiscal Office determines that the executive budget proposes to reduce funding for health care or higher education.

\$4.6 Billion State Capital Construction Budget



● **Priority 1 –**
Reauthorization
of existing
projects; eligible
for a cash line of
credit: \$1.72B

● **Priority 2 –**
Proposed new
funding for
projects; eligible
for a cash line of
credit: \$351M

● **Priority 3 & 4 –**
Proposed future
funding for
projects; must
receive a line of
credit: there are
no current Priority
3 or 4 projects

● **Priority 5 –**
Both proposed
new funding and
reauthorizations of
existing funding
for projects;
eligible for a non-
cash line of credit:
\$1.38B

● Division of
Administration
recommends
projects for
receipt of both
cash and non-
cash lines of
credit. The State
Bond Commission
considers and
grants lines of
credit

State Tax “Swap” Left at Gate



Plans to eliminate the state income taxes and increase the state's sales tax were shelved by the governor.



Additional bills to repeal or phase-out the state's corporate and individual income taxes were also deferred due to revenue concerns.



Tax Credits



New Markets Tax Credit - HB 726 reactivates the New Markets Tax Credit program to provide incentives for private businesses to invest in businesses located in low-income rural and “emerging urban” communities, costing \$24.7M over four years.



Solar Tax Credits - HB 705 reins in the increasing cost of the tax credit for installation of a solar energy system on a home or residential apartment complex. Changes include a sunset date of Jan. 1, 2018, a strict limit of one per residence, specific eligibility requirements, a more limited tax credit for leased systems, and exclusion of apartments.



Entertainment Industry Tax Credits - HB 483 extends the Tax Credit for Musical and Theatrical Productions by allowing projects which are certified by the sunset date an additional year to complete their projects. The program is reauthorized through 2018 but is limited to productions and projects located on a campus of a higher educational institution. **HB 358** extends the sunset date for Sound Recording Investor Tax Credit through 2020.



Registry for Transferrable Tax Credits - HB 377 establishes a central registry with the Department of Revenue for the registration and recordation of tax credits granted by the state and any subsequent transfers of tax credits.

BESE's proposed K-12 Funding Rejected

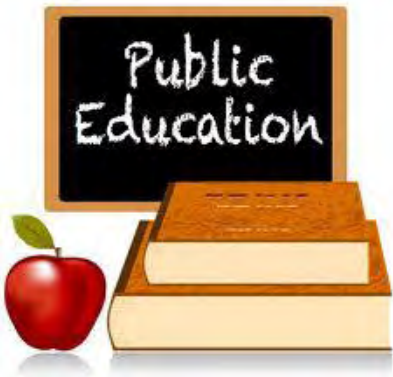
The Senate Education Committee rejected SCR 23, the BESE recommended MFP formula, citing inadequate funding for special education and gifted/talented students as well as substantive and procedural problems.

Under the state constitution, if the legislature does not approve the BESE recommendation, the formula reverts to the MFP last approved; however, the FY 12-13 MFP was declared unconstitutional which means that the last approved MFP was for FY 11-12 as contained in HCR 130.

HCR 130 funding in FY 11-12 was \$3.424B. Using HCR 130 for FY 12-13 requires an additional \$32M bringing FY 12-13 total MFP funding to \$3.456B.

Using HCR 130 for FY 13-14 requires an appropriation of \$3.44B. However, when the \$69M additional K-12 funding is included, the MFP appropriation for FY 13-14 is in excess of \$3.5B.

With all sources, including federal and local revenue, funding per public school student for FY 13-14 is expected to be in excess of \$12,500. There are approximately 700,000 students who attend Louisiana public schools.



2012 Education Legislation Revisited

Student Scholarship Program

- The manner of funding the 2012 School Voucher Program was ruled unconstitutional by the State Supreme Court wherein the court held that the MFP is to be used exclusively for funding of public education.
- \$45M was added to the state general fund to cover the cost of 8,500 voucher slots which is an increase over last year's funding of \$20M and includes an additional 4,000 slots.
- 35 organizations have applied for charters to operate 100 new schools in 19 parishes, which is nearly twice as many organizations than those which applied in 2012.

"Course Choice" Scaled Back

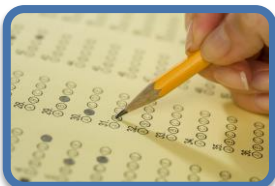
- Likewise, the court's ruling struck down the MFP funding of the Course Choice Program, where public school students can take on-line classes through online firms, colleges, and private course providers.
- In lieu of funding in the MFP, BESE and the Dept of Education have stated that they will provide funds for a pilot Course Choice Program; the average cost of one on-line course is \$700.



K-12 Educational Issues



School Safety - HB 718 requires that school crisis plans be developed jointly with law enforcement and emergency preparedness officials and **HB 368** authorizes school resource officers to be armed. Both bills require safety drills



ACT Testing - HB 343 and **SB 127** prohibit high school students with exceptionalities (except gifted/talented) who are not pursuing a high school diploma from being administered any test pursuant to LEAP or the school accountability program, including the ACT, unless their parents "opt in" or it's included in the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).



Teacher Evaluation - HB 160 would have delayed implementation of key provisions of the teacher evaluation program enacted in 2010; however, the bill was defeated in Senate Committee. This defeat retains present law use of "COMPASS" which bases half of a teacher's effectiveness on student performance, as determined by standardized testing, and the other half on classroom observations.



Teacher Pay Raise - Included in next year's budget, HB 1, is a certificated classroom teacher pay raise averaging \$577 and includes city and parish school systems, lab schools, Recovery School District, charter schools, and special schools.



Postsecondary Education

Community College Funding

- **SB 204** allows \$251 M in state bonds, outside the capital outlay system, to be sold to fund 28 construction projects at community colleges around the state. Requires 12% local match.

Tuition Control

- HBs 87 and 194 would have given the state's four higher education management boards greater control over college tuition. Both bills failed to garner sufficient support for passage.
- There remain two existing methods of raising college tuition:
 - (1) Through the 2010 LA Grad Act that lets colleges raise tuition up to 10% if they meet certain performance goals.
 - (2) By 2/3 vote of the legislature, the latter of which was used to pass **HB 671** which authorizes higher education boards to impose a \$48 campus maintenance fee, a \$2,500 increase for LSU digital media students, and \$575 for dental students at LSU's Health Sciences Center.

Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS)

- Attempts to "cap" TOPS were defeated. For the upcoming year, TOPS is funded at \$217M as compared to last year which was approximately \$180M.
- **SB 202** revises core curriculum requirements and the method of calculating the grade point average for TOPS awards so as not to penalize students who take advanced placement or other college-level courses.

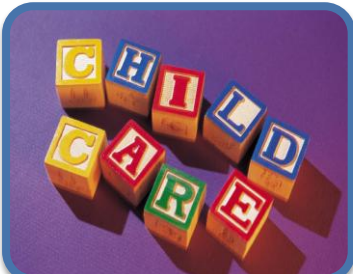
Retirement for College Employees

- **SB 16** is a retirement plan that allows employer contribution credits to remain at 5.7% rather than 1.8% which, according to college leaders, is important for recruiting and retaining.

Baby Issues



Surrogacy – SB 162 establishes a tight legal framework by which married couples can contract with a woman to act as their surrogate. Requirements include using the biological material of the couple who, out of medical necessity, need assistance in reproduction. The law further prohibits compensation other than health care and legal expenses, including reasonable living expenses of the surrogate.



Child Care Centers – SB 222 changes the classification of child day care centers from two “classes” to four “types” in order to reflect the diverse array of child care provider types and to provide for the early childhood education component of child care.



Coerced Abortion – HB 278 classifies as child abuse the act of a parent coercing his or her underage daughter to undergo an abortion. Specific acts of coercion include the use of force, intimidation, or the deprivation of food and shelter - or the threat of any of these – to compel a female child to undergo an abortion against her will.

Health Care Funding



Hospital Stabilization Fund – HB 532, a constitutional amendment, establishes a Medicaid reimbursement formula for hospitals, implements an annual hospital provider assessment through the formula, requires revenues generated from assessment be deposited in a newly created Hospital Stabilization Fund, and establishes reimbursement rate enhancements for Medicaid claims and uncompensated care costs. The constitutionally protected assessments would be self-imposed by the hospitals, and would be utilized to draw down federal Medicaid matching funds which, in turn, increased hospitals' reimbursement rates.



Louisiana Medical Assistance Trust Fund - HB 533, a constitutional amendment, places the Louisiana Medical Assistance Trust Fund in the constitution; establishes accounts within the fund to deposit provider fees; uses the accounts to provide reimbursement for Medicaid services; and establishes a base rate of reimbursement for certain provider groups. Provider fees, in the form of existing 'bed taxes' and other fees paid by nursing homes, pharmacies, and intermediate care facilities would be constitutionally protected and used to establish a minimum Medicaid rate and accounts for inflation.



Bed Taxes - SB 76 provides for "bed taxes" levied by nursing homes and intermediate care facilities for the developmentally disabled and for assessments paid by pharmacies. The legislation authorizes DHH to utilize those dollars to draw down federal matching funds which are to be used only for Medicaid reimbursements to the provider groups that contribute to the fund. The bill also strips from current law a provision that allowed certain monies to go to home- and community-based care for the elderly and developmentally disabled.



Affordable Care Act – Several legislative instruments to expand Medicaid health care coverage under the Affordable Care Act for the state's 400,000 uninsured residents were defeated, including HB 233 and SB 125 which mimicked Arkansas' private insurance based plan.

Closures and Privatization of Hospitals

Privatization of Nine Public Hospitals

- In New Orleans, Children's Hospital will take over the Interim LSU Public Hospital and its successor, the University Medical Center.
- Lafayette General Health System will operate University Medical Center in Lafayette.
- In Baton Rouge, Earl K. Long was closed and inpatient hospital care and medical education was shifted to Our Lady of the Lake with some women's health services shifted to Woman's Hospital.
- Lake Charles Memorial Hospital will take over W. H. Moss by moving its beds and building a new, \$5M outpatient clinic at the former Moss site.
- Leonard J. Chabert Medical Center in Houma will be taken over by Terrebonne General Medical Center and Southern Regional Medical Center.
- Hospital operations in Shreveport and Monroe will be taken over by the Biomedical Research Foundation of Northwest Louisiana.
- Discussions are still underway for the hospitals in Pineville and Bogalusa.
- LSU will continue to operate Lallie Kemp Regional Medical Center in Independence.

Various Issues Remain

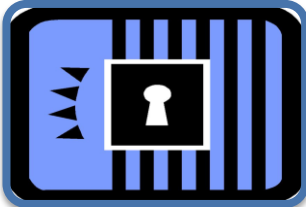
- AG opinion indicated governor didn't need legislative approval to privatize.
- Commissioner of Administration indicated that the total operating expense will hit \$1B which is more than the \$626M that was initially budgeted.
- The contracts for hospital privatization in New Orleans, Lafayette, and Baton Rouge obligated 94% of the funds originally budgeted.
- Some of the gap will be filled by using \$140M in private lease payments from the providers and "maintenance" savings.
- The layoff of thousands of LSU hospital employees is estimated to employer pension contributions by \$82M next year and will result in \$300M reduction in retirement system liabilities over 30 years.
- The Legislative Auditor has reported there will be an additional \$42M in "layoff" cost for expenses of the 5,200 workers laid off at six of the nine hospitals and another \$15M as additional layoffs occur.
- On June 5, 2013, the State Civil Service Comm. narrowly rejected the proposed layoffs of approximately 3,000 state employees at the LSU hospitals in New Orleans, Lafayette, Houma, and Lake Charles, noting a deficiency of information on the pending privatization agreements.

Criminal Law



Parole eligibility for certain juveniles

- Under **HB 152**, juveniles who are sentenced to life in prison for murder may be parole-eligible after serving 35 years of their sentence in response to the U.S. Supreme Court ruling last year that declared sentencing juveniles to life without the possibility of parole to be “cruel and unusual punishment”.



“Good Time”

- **HB 59** increases from 250 to 365 the total number of credits that may be earned by an offender for participation in certified treatment or rehabilitation programs.



Racketeering Activity

HB 279 adds the following crimes to the definition of “racketeering” which, if committed twice, allows prosecution as a pattern of racketeering activity resulting in increased criminal penalties and seizure of property used in the activity: Human trafficking, trafficking of children for sexual purposes, aggravated kidnapping of a child, sale of children, female genital mutilation, and bigamy.



Human Trafficking

SB 88 creates the Exploited Children’s Special Fund in which 50% of property which is forfeited as a result of human trafficking violations will be deposited and used to provide services and treatment to sexually exploited children.

Synthetic Drugs

HB 10 adds twenty-seven hallucinogen substances, including 25-I and C-Boom, to the list of Schedule I controlled dangerous substances.

HB 15 also adds synthetic cannabinoids and cathinones to the list of Schedule I substances.

Synthetic drugs are chemically-laced substances similar to marijuana, methamphetamine, and cocaine that are sold over-the-counter at some convenience stores, gas stations, and tobacco shops.

While Louisiana has banned specific formulas of synthetic drugs, drug makers sidestep these regulations by simply replacing one chemical compound with a new formulation. These new laws add all known chemical families that could be used in the manufacturing of synthetic drugs in an effort to stay a step ahead of the drug makers.



Meghan Lopez, a young college student, died on April 3, 2013, from taking the synthetic drug "C-Boom" at a picnic. Her mother and father asked that her story be shared in an effort to keep this and other deadly drugs out of the hands of our children.

Guns



Concealed-Carry Permits - HB 265 allows for the issuance of a lifetime concealed carry permit, costing \$500 and requiring retraining every 5 years.



Publishing list of concealed handgun permit owners - HB 8 makes it a crime for anyone to knowingly publicize or release for publication the information of concealed handgun permit holders, punishable by a fine of \$10,000 and six months in jail.



Off-duty law enforcement - HB 6 allows off-duty law enforcement officers to carry their firearms onto school campuses which are otherwise “weapon free zones”.



Reporting to NICS – HB 717 requires reporting of persons adjudicated in a court for mental health issues to the FBI’s National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS). SB 135 also requires reporting by the courts of anyone who loses his right to possess a firearm for certain legal violations to NICS.

State Government



Debt Collection - HB 629 establishes the office of debt recovery within the Dept. of Revenue to aid in the collection of delinquent debts. The bill gives to this newly created office “tools” with which to collect outstanding debt, including the revocation of state-issued licenses and seizing casino winnings, tax refunds, and bank accounts. It is estimated that over the next five years, the state could recover \$180 - \$200M of the more than \$1B owed to it.

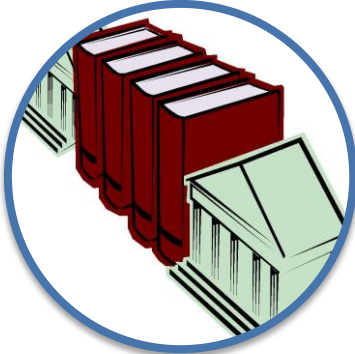


Boards and Commissions - HB 156 abolishes an additional 15 various boards and commissioners such as the Commission on Men’s Health and Wellness, the Sustainable Local Food Policy Council, and the Reptile and Amphibian Task Force and provides for the sunset of statutory boards and commissions that fail to report required financial information.



Department of Elderly Affairs - HB 352 would create a new state department dedicated solely to elderly affairs and all issues affecting senior citizens. However, the state constitution only allows for 20 departments, thus the bill delays effectiveness of the actual creation of the department until such time as the legislature eliminates an existing department, consolidates departments, or changes the constitution.

Transparency in Government



Custodian of Public Records

HCR 129 requires each public body that has a custodian of public records to make the identity and contact information of the custodian available to the public.

Custodian information for the Louisiana Legislature is available on its website, under FAQs and “Contact Us” at <https://www.legis.la.gov>



Medicaid Transparency

SB 55 requires an annual report by DHH about both the Louisiana Medicaid Bayou Health program and the Louisiana Behavioral Health Partnership program, which programs were previously run publically but now are handled by six private companies.



Scholarship Transparency

SB 31 requires that higher education board members make public who they are giving scholarships to and the value of the award.

It was reported that board members of LSU and SU boards award over 180 scholarships, valued at more than \$1M a year.

State Employment



Pay Raises for Certain Officials

HB 174 and **SB 63** grant Clerks of Courts and Tax Assessors the authority for a pay raise of 4% annually for the next four years.

SB 188 grants state judges a pay raise ranging from 3.7% to 5.5% depending on which court the judge was elected and subsequent raises of 2.1% until 2017, and triggers pay raises for sheriffs and some parish presidents.



State Retirement Benefits

The legality of last year's "cash balance" plan for new state employee hires remains in the hands of the State Supreme Court. In the meantime, **HCR 2** suspends until July 1, 2014 implementation of the entire plan.



Equal Pay in State Employment

A scaled-back version of **SB 153** prohibits wage discrimination between the sexes in *state* employment. The bill requires equal compensation for equal work, but provides exceptions for other factors not related to sex such as seniority and merit.

Transportation



Distracted Drivers

SB 147 amends the distracted driving law by prohibiting the use of social media while driving: no tweeting, using Facebook, posting on Instagram, or using other social networks.



I'm Cajun

SB 201 authorizes "I'm a Cajun" to be printed on a state driver's license or state ID for an additional \$5 with the proceeds being dedicated to the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL).



Prestige License Plates

HB 147 creates the "I'm Cajun... and proud" and "I'm Creole... and proud" license plates.

HCR 67 authorizes the "Battle of New Orleans Bicentennial 1815-2015" on license plates.

HB 159 creates a prestige plate for the March of Dimes.

Crescent City Connection (CCC)

After two elections, the tolls on the Crescent City Connection almost 25 years ago will no longer be collected.

SB 215 requires DOTD to dedicate up to \$4M of its budget to the operation of the Chalmette ferry; dedicates to the New Orleans Ferry Fund license fees and taxes collected on trucks and trailers in NOLA to fund operations of the Chalmette ferry and other ferry services formerly operated by the CCC Division; and authorizes a local public agency or municipality to operate the ferries and set crossing fees.

HB 416 authorizes the creation of two new state income box check-offs: one to defray the cost of operating the decorative lighting on the CCC and the other for the ferries.

SB 218 prohibits the state from collecting CCC toll violations issued since March 5, 2013 and creates an amnesty program for violations occurring before 2013. Also allows \$1.4M of the \$4M set aside in 2012 from past toll revenue to be used for operations.

HB 348 authorizes a mechanism to refund motorists who paid tolls this year or who still have money on their Geaux Pass by utilizing the existing structure and expertise of the State Treasurer in returning unclaimed property.



Additional Matters of Local Concern

- **HB 561** takes away financial control from the St. Tammany Parish Coroner's Office after alleged abuses, including high salaries and lavish spending, within that office and places financial control with the parish government.

St. Tammany
Coroner



- **SB 242** authorizes a voluntary, optional 1.5% hotel assessment in New Orleans, the proceeds of which will be used for sales and marketing to promote New Orleans as a tourist destination.

Optional Hotel
Assessment in
NOLA



- **HB 516** would authorize the construction of a private hotel and other projects around the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center by using tax-free bonds to fund the improvements.

Morial
Convention
Center Expansion



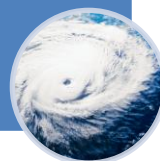
- The Legislature gave approval to bring IBM's software development center to Baton Rouge, including \$23M in Mega-funds, \$34.1M in state general funds, and \$16.9M in CDBG funds. An additional \$4.5M will come from EBR.

IBM



- With NOAA predicting 13-20 names storms of which 7 to 11 could become hurricanes ~ including 3 to 6 major hurricanes ~ GOHSEP reminds all Louisianans to "Get a Game Plan" at www.getagameplan.org

Hurricane Season



Legislative Response to Sinkholes

Tighter controls for wells and caverns

- **HB 493** requires submission of site assessments and updates of the stability of salt stock and sediment for past, current, and future wells and caverns.

It further requires setback distances for new caverns from the edge of the salt stock and enhanced monitoring of existing caverns as well as additional permit requirements and financial stability to, among other things, provide assistance to residents of areas in potential risk due to a sinkhole or incident that requires evacuation.



Disclosure of nearby cavern

- **HB 494** requires sellers to notify prospective homeowners if a salt dome containing solution mining or a storage cavern is underneath or within ½ mile of property. It also requires the owner or operator of a salt dome, mining activity, or natural gas cavern to file notice thereof in the mortgage and conveyance records of the respective parish.

Northern Assumption Parish communities of Bayou Corne and Grand Bayou

- 15.1 acre sinkhole at site of salt dome cavern.
- Evacuation of 350 residents for more than nine months, and counting.
- 54 caverns have been drilled into the salt dome since the 1950's.
- Class-action status was granted consolidating four lawsuits in federal court.

Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill of 2010, Update

Natural Resource Damage Assessment

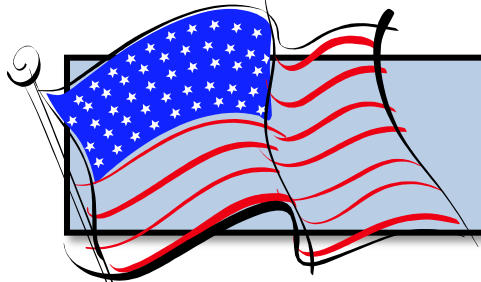
- Louisiana announced agreement with BP Oil Exploration on \$342M in proposed Early Restoration projects:
 - \$320M for Outer Coast Restoration in Plaquemines and Terrebonne Parishes
 - \$22M for Marine Fisheries Enhancement, Research and Science Center in Calcasieu and Plaquemines Parishes.

RESTORE Act - Eighty percent of civil and administrative Clean Water Act (CWA) fines from the BP spill will be directed to the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Trust Fund for ecosystem and economic restoration in the Gulf Coast. To date, certain Transocean entities have settled their liability with the U.S. Dept. of Justice for \$1B of which 80% will be paid into the Restore Trust Fund over several years.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

• In early 2013, the U.S. District Court approved two plea agreements resolving the criminal cases against BP and Transocean Ltd. The agreements direct a total of \$2.54B to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to fund projects benefitting the natural resources of the Gulf Coast that were impacted by the spill.





Military & Veterans

Military Code

- **HB 127** updates the La. Code of Military Justice by creating the offenses of sexual assault, stalking, additional offenses related to sexual misconduct, forcible pandering, and indecent exposure.

Impersonation of a Veteran

- **SB 60** criminalizes the impersonation of a veteran and the fraudulent misrepresentation of a veteran-owned business with the intent to injure, defraud, obtain economic gain, or obtain or secure any special privilege; up to \$1,000 fine and 6 months in jail.

Military Status can mitigate criminal sentencing

- **SB 32** authorizes criminal courts to check on a defendant's military status before conviction and anyone determined to be a veteran or current member of the military with a diagnosed mental disorder would then be able to seek treatment in consultation with the state and federal Department of Veterans Affairs.

Increased Penalties for Disrupting Burials

- **SB 72** establishes a funeral and burial "buffer zone" and increases the fine from \$100 to \$500 for disturbing the peace relative to a funeral procession, route, or burial.

Governmental and Occupational Licenses

- **HB 312** allows a military service member 180 days from the end of his service to renew a government-issued license or a professional or occupational license.

In Remembrance....

- In a Memorial Day ceremony, the Louisiana House of Representatives honored the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces, which ceremony included the U.S. Marine Corps Band, soldiers of the Washington Artillery unit of the Louisiana Army National Guard presenting the colors in vintage 1838 uniforms, and a 21-gun salute by the LSU ROTC.

Matters “Of Interest”

- **SB 205** requires school districts to offer a foreign language immersion program upon petition of 25 parents, provided teachers are available.

Foreign Language Immersion



- **SB 8** allows inmates in parish jails to do manual labor at churches and other religious buildings as part of their work duties.

Inmates work in Churches



- **SB 58** allows for the donation of wild game including fish, duck, and deer, to charitable organizations for meals.

Donation of Game



- **SB 18** exempts those who sell up to \$20,000 of cookies and cakes out of their homes from certain sanitation rules that require the use of commercial equipment.

Home Bakers



- **SB 156** requires lessors to disclose to those who rent apartments or houses or residents of condominiums, or prospective renters and residents, of any foreclosure action to which the dwelling is subject.

Rights of Residents



2013 Capitol Christmas Ornament



Constitutional Amendments

November 2014



HB 131 – prohibits bills that grant “rebates” or other tax incentives from being introduced in “limited” sessions of the legislature just as tax exemptions, exclusions, deductions, or credits are currently prohibited.

HB 256 provides an 18-mo. redemption period for blighted or abandoned property sold at tax sale.

HB 426 requires two at-large members of the Wildlife & Fisheries Commission be from North Louisiana.

HB 532 creates the Hospital Stabilization Fund.

HB 533 constitutionally protects the Medical Assistance Trust Fund.

SB 56 removes requirement of annual recertification of those permanently disabled for purposes of ad valorem taxation.

SB 96 –reduces the eligibility threshold for disabled veterans and spouses from 100% disabled to “totally disabled or unemployable” for purposes of exemption from property taxes

SB 128 constitutionally protects the Artificial Reef Development Fund.