

House Committee on Appropriations

Minutes of Meeting
2016-2017 Interim Session
December 14, 2016

I. CALL TO ORDER

Representative Cameron Henry, Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations, called the meeting to order at 9:28 a.m. in Room 5, in the State Capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The secretary called the roll.

II. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Representative Cameron Henry, Chairman
Representative Mark Abraham
Representative Beryl A. Amedée
Representative Tony Bacala
Representative Lawrence A. "Larry" Bagley
Representative John A. Berthelot
Representative Robert E. Billiot
Representative Charles R. Chaney
Representative Rick Edmonds
Representative Franklin J. Foil
Representative Lance Harris
Representative Bob Hensgens
Representative Katrina R. Jackson
Representative Walt Leger, III
Representative Jack G. McFarland
Representative Blake Miguez
Representative Dustin Miller
Representative Steve E. Pylant
Representative John M. Schroder, Sr.
Representative Scott M. Simon
Representative Patricia Haynes Smith
Representative Jerome "Zee" Zeringue

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Representative James K. Armes, III
Representative Gary M. Carter, Jr.
Representative Valarie Hodges

Representative Jerome Richard
Representative Julie Stokes

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ms. Katie Andress, Secretary
Ms. Penny B. Bouquet, Administrative Secretary
Mr. Peter G. E. Conroy, Legislative Analyst
Ms. Nancy Keaton, Legislative Analyst

ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:

None

III. DISCUSSION

House Bill No. 1 by Representative Henry

The following agencies contained in House Bill No. 1 were presented and discussed:

Higher Education

Mr. Daniel Waguespack, Budget Analyst for the House Fiscal Division, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-7477, presented an overview and discussed the FY 17-18 budget request for the department.

Board of Regents

Dr. Joseph C. Rallo, Commissioner of Higher Education, 1201 North Third Street, Suite 6-200, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-4253, discussed the effects of budget reductions on the department. He also discussed the burden of mandated costs on universities with Representative Amedée.

Mr. Terrence Ginn, Deputy Commissioner of Finance and Administration for the Board of Regents, 1201 North Third Street, Suite 6-200, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-4253, and Dr. Rallo discussed the functions of the board and efficiency measures taken to reduce administrative costs with Representatives Bagley and McFarland.

Dr. Rallo discussed alternatives to the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) and a proposal to change TOPS eligibility requirements with Representatives Billiot and Leger.

Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS)

Dr. Monty Sullivan, President of LCTCS, 265 South Foster Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (225) 992-2800, discussed the impact of FY17-18 budget reductions on the department. He also discussed the importance of dual enrollment for high school students with Representative Smith.

Dr. Sullivan discussed the correlation between the enrollment of non-traditional students into LCTCS, the state's unemployment rate, and the Wise Fund with Representative Leger.

Louisiana State University System

Dr. F. King Alexander, President of the Louisiana State University System, 3810 West Lakeshore Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, (225) 578-2111, discussed the impact of FY17-18 budget reductions on the university. He also discussed the effects of reducing the TOPS Program on students with Representative Foil.

Dr. Alexander discussed the return on investment from federal research grants and the indirect effects of those funds on the local community with Representative Amedée.

Dr. Dan Layzell, Chief Financial Officer for LSU, 330 Thomas Boyd Hall, Baton Rouge, LA 70803, (225) 578-3386, discussed increased in-state scholarship funding for students with Representative Henry.

Southern University System

Dr. Ray L. Belton, President of the Southern University System, P.O. Box 9374, Baton Rouge, LA 70813, (225) 771-5020, discussed the impact of budget reductions on the university.

University of Louisiana System (UL)

Dr. Dan D. Reneau, Jr., Interim President of the UL System, 1201 North Third Street, 7-300, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-6950, provided statistical information regarding the UL System. (See Exhibit A)

Dr. Jim Henderson, President of the UL System, 1201 North Third Street, 7-300, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-6950, discussed his plans for the UL System and the importance of funding Higher Education.

Special Schools and Commissions

Louisiana Schools for the Deaf and Visually Impaired (LSDVI)

Mr. Tim Mathis, Budget Analyst for the House Fiscal Division, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-9101, presented an overview and discussed the schools' FY17-18 budget request.

Mr. Ralph Thibodeaux, Superintendent of LSDVI, 2888 Brightside Lane, Baton Rouge, LA 70820, (225) 757-3200, discussed an overview of the schools and services provided to students. He also discussed how federal funds are utilized and matched with state effort with Representative McFarland. (See Exhibits B & C)

Louisiana Special Education Center

Mr. Mathis presented an overview and discussed the FY17-18 budget request for the center.

Mr Thibodeaux discussed student qualification requirements and the types of services provided by the center. (Exhibit D)

Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts (LSMSA)

Mr. Mathis presented an overview and discussed the school's budget request for FY17-18.

Dr. Steve Horton, Executive Director of LSMSA, 715 University Parkway, Natchitoches, LA, 71457, (318) 357-2520, presented a brief history of the school and accomplishments. (See Exhibit E)

New Orleans Center for Creative Arts (NOCCA)

Mr. Mathis presented an overview of the center and discussed the FY17-18 budget request.

Mr. Kyle Wedberg, President of NOCCA, 2800 Chartres Street, New Orleans, LA, 70117, (504) 940-2787, discussed some of the school's accomplishments, the types of students served, and the budget request for FY17-18. (See Exhibit F)

Louisiana Educational Television Authority (LETA)

Mr. Mathis presented an overview and discussed the agency's FY17-18 budget request.

Ms. Beth Courtney, President of LETA, 7733 Perkins Road, Baton Rouge, LA, 70810, (225) 767-4200, discussed the functions and benefits of Louisiana Public Broadcasting (LPB) and the requested budget for FY17-18. (See Exhibit E)

Board of Elementary & Secondary Education (BESE)

Mr. Mathis presented an overview of the board and discussed the requested budget for FY17-18.

Ms. Shan Davis, Executive Director of BESE, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA, 70802, (225) 342-5840, discussed the functions of the board and the budget request for FY17-18.

Thrive Academy

Mr. Mathis presented an overview and discussed the academy's FY17-18 budget request.

Ms. Sarah Broome, Executive Director of Thrive Academy, 2585 Brightside Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 726-3355, presented an overview and the demographics of the academy. She also discussed the primary funding sources for the academy with Representative Smith, and discussed the services offered with Representative Edmonds.

Department of Education

Mr. Mathis presented an overview and discussed the department's FY17-18 budget request.

Dr. John White, Superintendent of Education, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-7279, discussed an overview of the department's budget request for FY17-18, and discussed the LA4 Program and funding for childcare assistance programs with Representative Smith.

Dr. White discussed the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) funding forecast, funded vacancies within the department, and the sources of funding for student assessments with Representative Henry.

Department of Revenue

Mr. Chas Nichols, Budget Analyst for the House Fiscal Division, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-4222, presented an overview of the department and discussed the FY17-18 budget request.

Secretary Kimberly L. Robinson, Department of Revenue, 617 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 219-2717, discussed the need for out of state tax collection centers with Representative Amedée.

Ms. Juana Lombard, Commissioner of the Office of Alcohol and Tobacco Control, 7979 Independence Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (225) 925-4041, discussed the need for funds to replace certain vehicles in the office's fleet with Representative Amedée. She also discussed the types of fees and self-generated revenue collected with Representative Harris.

Secretary Robinson discussed changes to the tax exemption on food for home consumption and the department's efforts to collect unpaid sales taxes with Representative Harris. She also discussed the importance of keeping the department's call center fully funded with Representative Bagley.

Secretary Robinson and Mr. Jarrod Coniglio, Assistant Secretary for the Office of Debt Recovery, 617 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 219-2717, discussed the department's efforts to recover uncollected debt with Representative Schroder.

Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC)

Mr. Blake Ruiz, Budget Analyst for the House Fiscal Division, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-0474, presented an overview and discussed the agency's FY17-18 budget request.

Ms. Ava Dejoie, Executive Director of LWC, 1001 North 23rd Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-3001, discussed the services provided by the agency and the FY17-18 budget request.

Department of Treasury

Mr. Chris Henry, Budget Analyst for the House Fiscal Division, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-1394, presented an overview and discussed the department's FY17-18 budget request.

Treasurer Ron Henson, 900 North Third Street, Third Floor, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-0010, discussed the cost of using a centralized banking service with Representative Bacala.

Department of Economic Development (LED)

Mr. Henry presented an overview and discussed the FY17-18 budget request for the department.

Mr. Don Pierson, LED Secretary, 1051 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-3000, discussed the department's efforts to prepare for budget reductions and discussed the department's industrial tax exemption program with Representatives Abraham and Billiot.

Department of Public Safety and Corrections

Corrections Services

Mr. Mark Antoon, Budget Analyst for the House Fiscal Division, 900 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70804, (225) 342-2412, presented an overview of the department and discussed the budget request for FY17-18.

Secretary James M. LeBlanc, Department of Corrections, 504 Mayflower Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70884, (225) 342-6702, discussed certain items in the department's FY17-18 budget request, including funding for deferred maintenance.

Secretary LeBlanc discussed the state's re-entry programs and recidivism rate with Representative Pylant. The Secretary and Mr. Thomas Bickham, Undersecretary for the Department of Corrections, 504 Mayflower Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70884, no telephone number provided, discussed the need for a merit increase for probation and parole officers with Representative Leger.

Secretary LeBlanc discussed the cost associated with reducing the state's prison population with Representative McFarland. The Secretary also discussed the Prison Enterprise System with Representative Henry.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

V. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Representative Berthelot offered a motion to adjourn. Without objection, the motion passed by a vote of 21 yeas and 0 nays. Representatives Henry, Abraham, Amedée, Bacala, Bagley, Berthelot, Billiot, Chaney, Edmonds, Foil, Harris, Hensgens, Jackson, Leger, McFarland, Miguez, Pylant, Schroder, Simon, Smith, and Zeringue voted yea.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Cameron Henry
House Committee on Appropriations