Friends,

Last Thursday, the Legislature adjourned the Louisiana 2021 General Legislative Session. This year’s session was jam-packed with several necessary tax and infrastructure reforms. Additionally, we were able to strengthen our state’s protections for sexual assault survivors. Despite the early mornings and long nights, we worked together as public servants to make our state more competitive, prosperous, and to protect all Louisianans.

**TAX REFORM:** Our most significant advancement was made with a tax reform package comprised of SB157, 159, 160, and 161 by Sen. Brett Allain, HB278 by Rep. Stuart Bishop, and HB292 by Rep. Neil Riser. This package of legislation accomplished a few things, namely lowering income tax rates and simplifying our state’s tax code. Additionally, HB199 by Speaker Clay Schexnayder was passed, streamlining our state’s sales tax collection. These reforms place our state one step closer to the forefront of economic competitiveness.

**INFRASTRUCTURE:** Far too long, Louisiana has fallen behind national ratings when it comes to infrastructure. That’s why I was proud to work with my fellow legislators in finding bipartisan solutions to fund infrastructure on the state level. The most promising change came in the form of HB514 by Rep. Tanner Magee, which will re dedicate the existing vehicle sales tax to the Construction sub-fund of the Transportation Trust Fund— directly funding Louisiana’s roads and bridges, including a new Mississippi River Bridge! This bill is the largest infrastructure investment since the 1980s, and we managed to pass it without raising taxes.

**WORKER SHORTAGE:** The governor signed HB183 by Rep. Chad Brown that increases the state’s unemployment benefits by $28 a week starting next year in return for agreeing to withdraw the state from the federal stimulus program for those unemployed during the pandemic that bumps up unemployment payments by $300. The deal drew the support of the state’s largest business groups and helped resolve growing concerns that the increased federal benefits are causing a continued worker shortage.

**LSU SEXUAL ASSAULT SCANDAL:** In the past few months, all of us have been shocked to learn of the LSU Administration’s failure to properly handle several sexual assault and harassment allegations levied against LSU athletes.
I was proud to sponsor and co-author Sen. Beth Mizell’s SB230, which creates greater transparency and accountability in the Title IX reporting process, ensuring what happened at LSU is never repeated.

With COVID-19 cases declining dramatically, our country and our state are nearing the end of this pandemic. Like you all, I want Louisiana to take advantage of the opportunities afforded as we recover and build back stronger. Looking forward, I’m confident that the legislation passed in this session will prove a turning point for our state.

As always, thank you for your continued support. I will continue praying for you and your family’s health and wellness. Please continue to send me your thoughts and ideas! My door is always open.

All the best,

Paula

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