



**ACADIANA LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION
STATE OF LOUISIANA**

P.O. Box 44500
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-4500

**PRESS RELEASE
2014 SESSION PRIORITIES FOR THE ACADIANA DELEGATION**

The Acadiana Legislative Delegation, which is comprised of State Representatives and Senators from twenty-two (22) parishes in the southern portion of the State of Louisiana, is pleased to announce a few of its major priorities for the 2014 Legislative Session. The Delegation, as a united front, has decided to pull together and place these vitally important issues at the forefront of the 2014 Session. The following are the three major issues that the Delegation will be addressing:

- **Acadiana Crime Lab**

The Delegation will be vigorously pushing for State funding for the Acadiana Crime Lab. The Acadiana Crime Laboratory was created in 1971 by an act of the Louisiana State Legislature to support regional law enforcement in eight Acadiana parishes – Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, and Vermilion. It has also been nationally accredited since April of 2001. However, this laboratory is not funded through the State like that of the Louisiana State Crime Lab, but is instead only funded through collection of court costs generated by the eight parishes it encompasses. At the current rate of decline of the Acadiana Crime Lab's income, its fund balance will likely be fully depleted during the budget year of 2015. Additional funding is necessary to ensure that the Acadiana Crime Lab stays fully operational. While this laboratory may only encompass eight parishes in the Acadiana Region, its closure would have drastic consequences that would be felt throughout the entire State of Louisiana. If this laboratory were to close, several District Attorneys, law enforcement officials, and judges have stated that cases will take much longer to prosecute due to the additional burden that would be put on the shoulders of the Louisiana State Crime Lab. Additionally, there is a high probability that rapes would go unsolved for as long as five to seven years because of the closure. Because of these facts, and more, the Delegation has decided to unite as one to ensure that prosecutions throughout Louisiana will remain as efficient and quick as possible, and it has begun efforts to keep the Acadiana Crime Lab open through 2015 and beyond.

- **CODOFIL**

The Delegation will continue to remain stern in its effort to gain additional funding for the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL). CODOFIL plays a vital role in French Immersion and secondary-language education, as well as Louisiana industry and tourism. It is, however, in desperate need of additional funding, and the Delegation will continue to work with Governor Jindal and State Superintendent John White to ensure that CODOFIL receives the funding that it deserves.



**ACADIANA LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION
STATE OF LOUISIANA**

P.O. Box 44500
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-4500

- **French Immersion**

Along with its efforts to gain additional funding for CODOFIL, the Delegation plans to address the need to maintain French Immersion programs throughout the State of Louisiana. One way it will do this is by clarifying language in the French Immersion Choice Act that allows parents to require a traditional public school to provide immersion education if enough children of kindergarten age request it. French Immersion has an important role in maintaining both the Cajun French and Creole French cultures that exist nowhere like that of the Acadiana Region. The Delegation feels strongly that it has the responsibility of ensuring that these programs remain accessible to all citizens of the Acadiana Region, both young and old, so it will continue its efforts in ensuring their existence remains a major priority for the State Legislature.

The Acadiana Delegation will continue in its efforts to ensure that these issues, as well as other important issues throughout the Acadiana Region, will be brought to the attention of the State Legislature. Together as one united front, it will continue to work tirelessly for all of the citizens of Acadiana.