

Representative Jack McFarland
Chairman



Representative Jason Hughes
Vice Chairman

Fiscal Year 2026 Executive Budget Review

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

House Committee on Appropriations
House Fiscal Division

March 25, 2025

Budget Analyst: Paige Philyaw

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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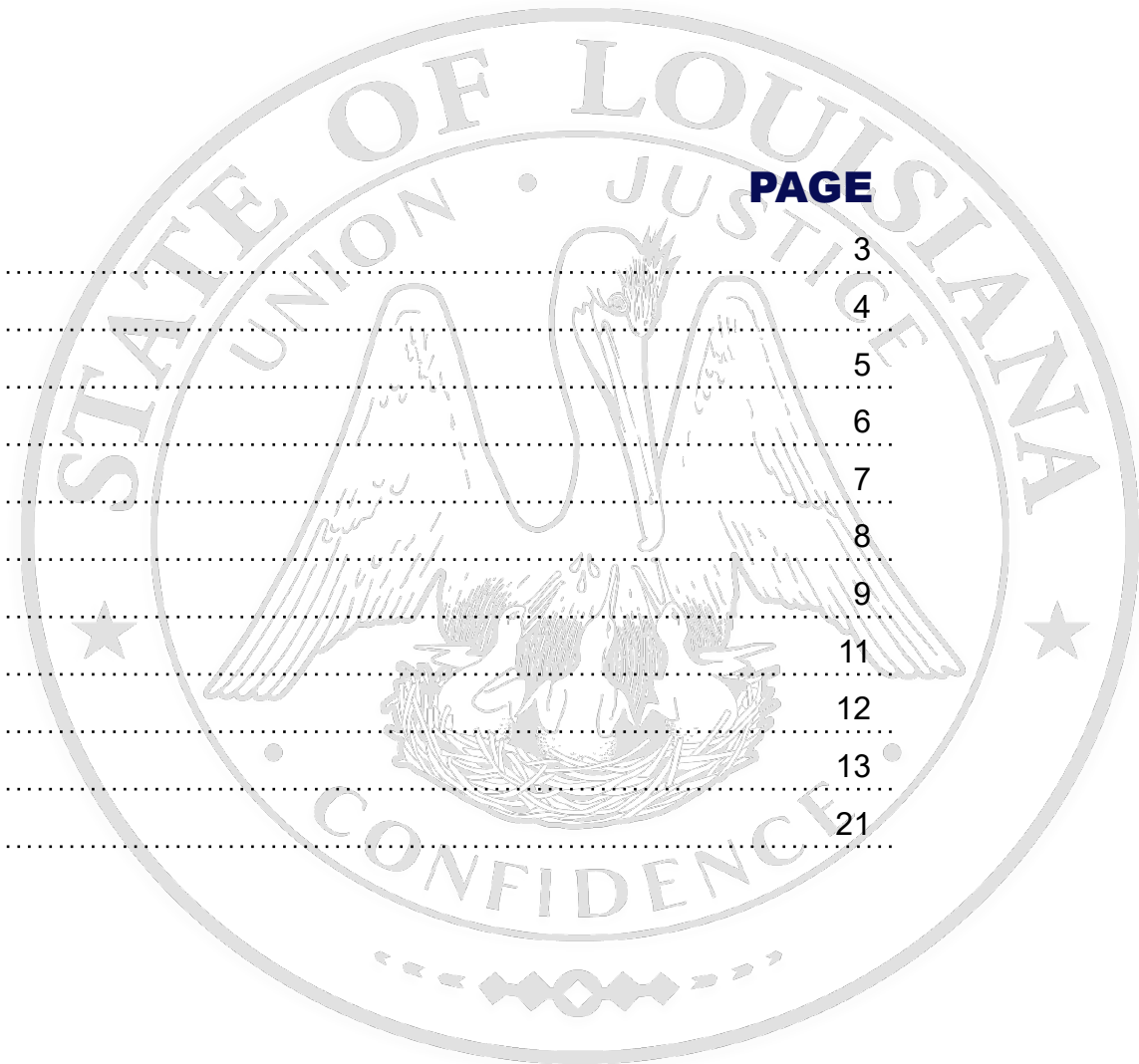
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All data and figures were obtained from the governor's Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Executive Budget and Supporting Documents provided by the Office of Planning and Budget within the Division of Administration along with House Bill 1 of the 2025 Regular Session, unless otherwise noted.

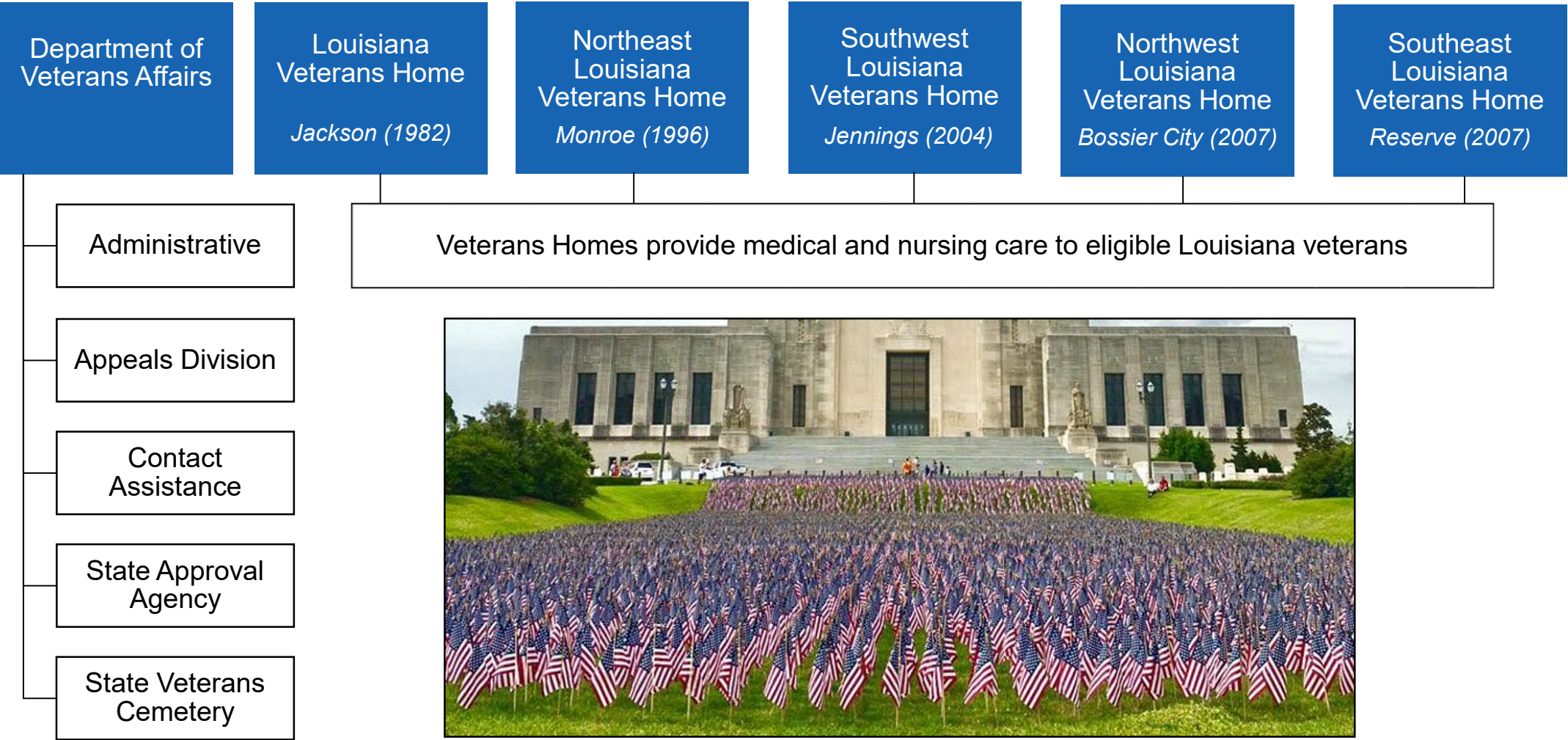
<https://www.doa.la.gov/doa/opb/budget-documents/>

TOPIC

	PAGE
Department Organization	3
FY 26 Budget Recommendation	4
Historical Spending	5
Sources of Funding	6
Funding Comparison	7
FY 26 Expenditure Recommendation	8
Expenditure Comparison	9
Personnel Information	11
Department Contacts	12
General Department Information	13
General Budgetary Information	21



DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

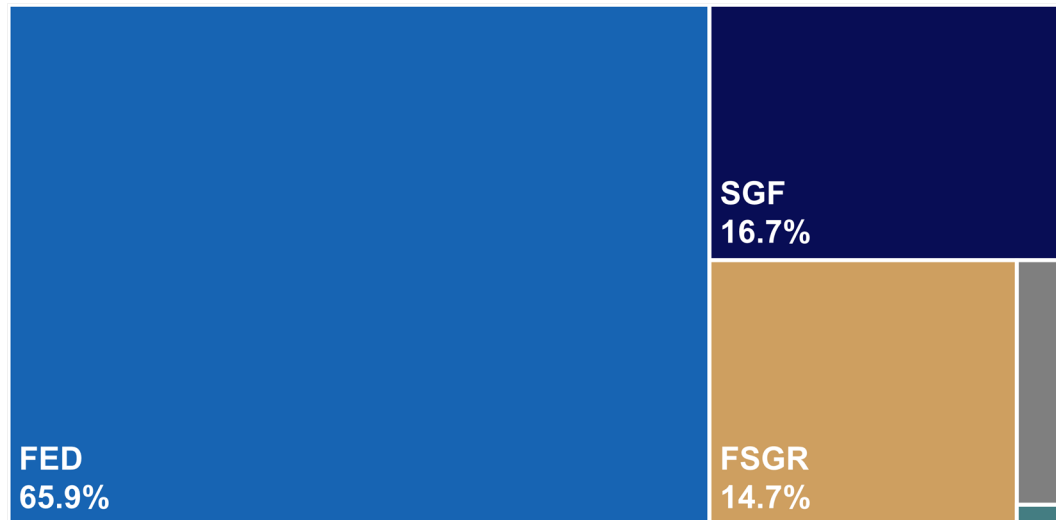


Note: Further detail on department programs, functions, and services are under the General Department Information section.

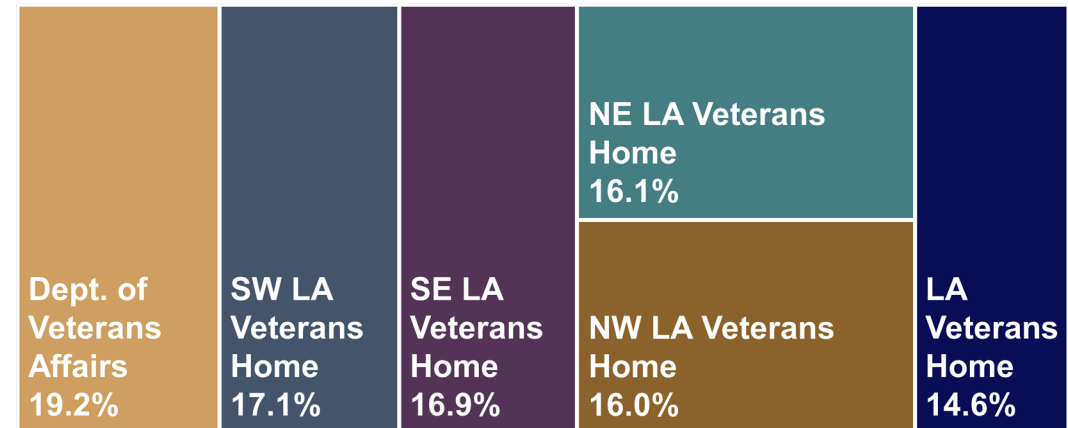
FY 26 BUDGET RECOMMENDATION

Total Funding = \$102,161,943

Means of Finance		
State General Fund	\$	17,107,297
Interagency Transfers		2,513,238
Fees & Self-generated		15,026,428
Statutory Dedications		215,528
Federal Funds		67,299,452
Total	\$	102,161,943



Program Funding & Authorized Positions			
		<i>Amount</i>	<i>Positions</i>
Dept. of Veterans Affairs	\$	19,647,440	126
Louisiana Veterans Home		14,885,792	122
Northeast La Veterans Home		16,494,960	149
Southwest La Veterans Home		17,458,238	153
Northwest La Veterans Home		16,374,376	150
Southeast La Veterans Home		17,301,137	151
Total	\$	102,161,943	851

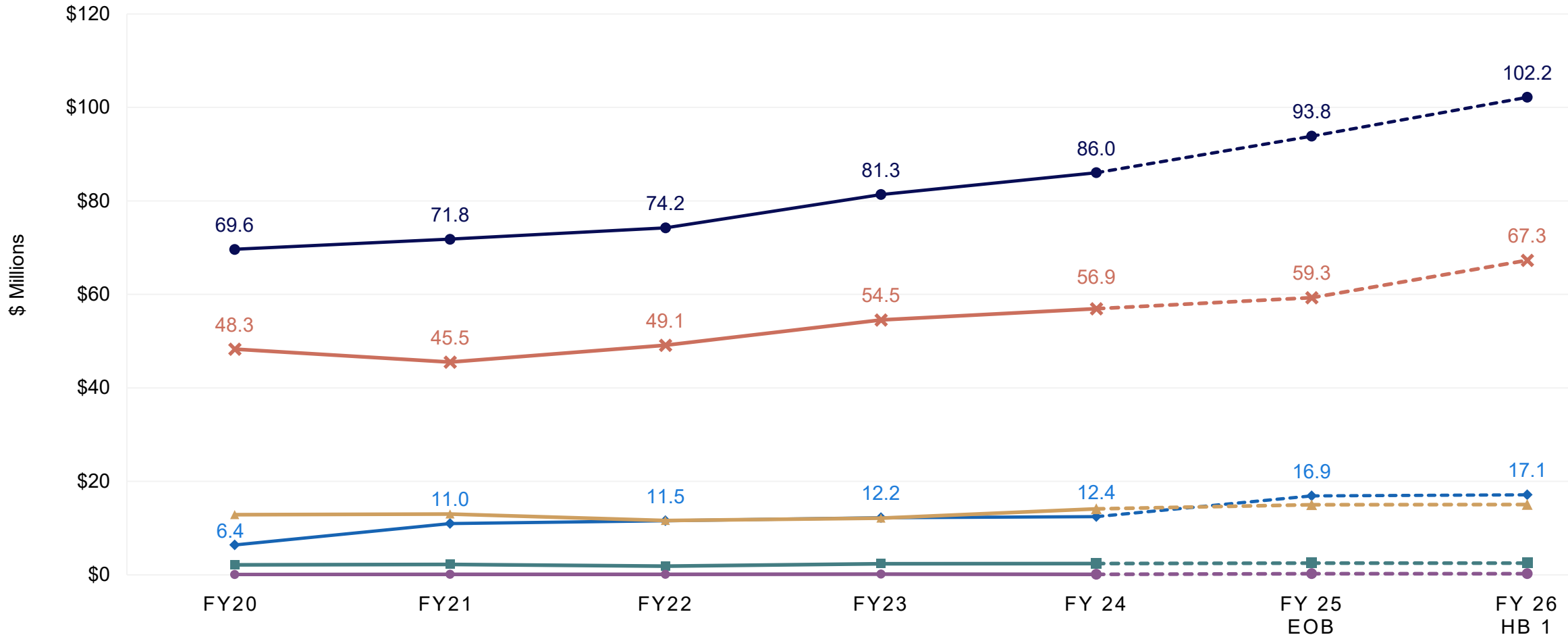


HISTORICAL SPENDING

◆ State General Fund
■ Interagency Transfers
▲ Fees & Self-generated
● Statutory Dedications
✕ Federal Funds
● Total Budget

Annual Average Spending Change from FY 20 to 24:

18.2%	3.3%	2.3%	35.9%	4.2%	5.4%
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SOURCES OF FUNDING

State General Fund \$17.1 M	Interagency Transfers \$2.5 M	Self-generated Revenue \$15 M	Statutory Dedications \$215,528	Federal Funds \$67.3 M
<p>The chief operating fund of the State recognized by the Revenue Estimating Conference from various taxes, licenses, fees, and other revenue sources except for those identified as other means of financing</p>	<p>Funding is derived from the following transfers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1.8 M from the various Veterans Homes into the main agency for support services • \$718,574 from the various Veterans Home towards contribution for an internal auditor position that services all the homes 	<p>Revenues derived from the following sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$13.6 M from the Veterans Homes, funds are derived from the residents' ability to pay for part of their care and from employees and visitors purchasing meal tickets • \$1.5 M from the Contact Assistance Program, funds are derived from each parish's contribution towards providing a veterans service office 	<p>Funding is derived from the Louisiana Military Family Assistance Fund it collects donations from businesses and citizens throughout Louisiana, including via an individual or a corporate state income tax check-off</p>	<p>Federal funding derived from the following sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$64.5 M from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for patient care and reimbursement of various services and expenses • \$2.8 M from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Resources for Medicare and Medicaid Services

FUNDING COMPARISON

Means of Finance	FY 24 Actual Expenditures	FY 25 Existing Operating Budget 12/1/24	FY 26 HB1 Budget	Change Existing Operating Budget to HB1		Change Actual Expenditures to HB1	
SGF	\$ 12,439,131	\$ 16,865,961	\$ 17,107,297	\$ 241,336	1.4%	\$ 4,668,166	37.5%
IAT	2,413,623	2,479,430	2,513,238	33,808	1.4%	99,615	4.1%
FSGR	14,095,641	14,963,271	15,026,428	63,157	0.4%	930,787	6.6%
Stat Ded	102,187	215,528	215,528	0	0.0%	113,341	110.9%
Federal	56,940,990	59,302,436	67,299,452	7,997,016	13.5%	10,358,462	18.2%
Total	\$ 85,991,572	\$ 93,826,626	\$ 102,161,943	\$ 8,335,317	8.9%	\$ 16,170,371	18.8%

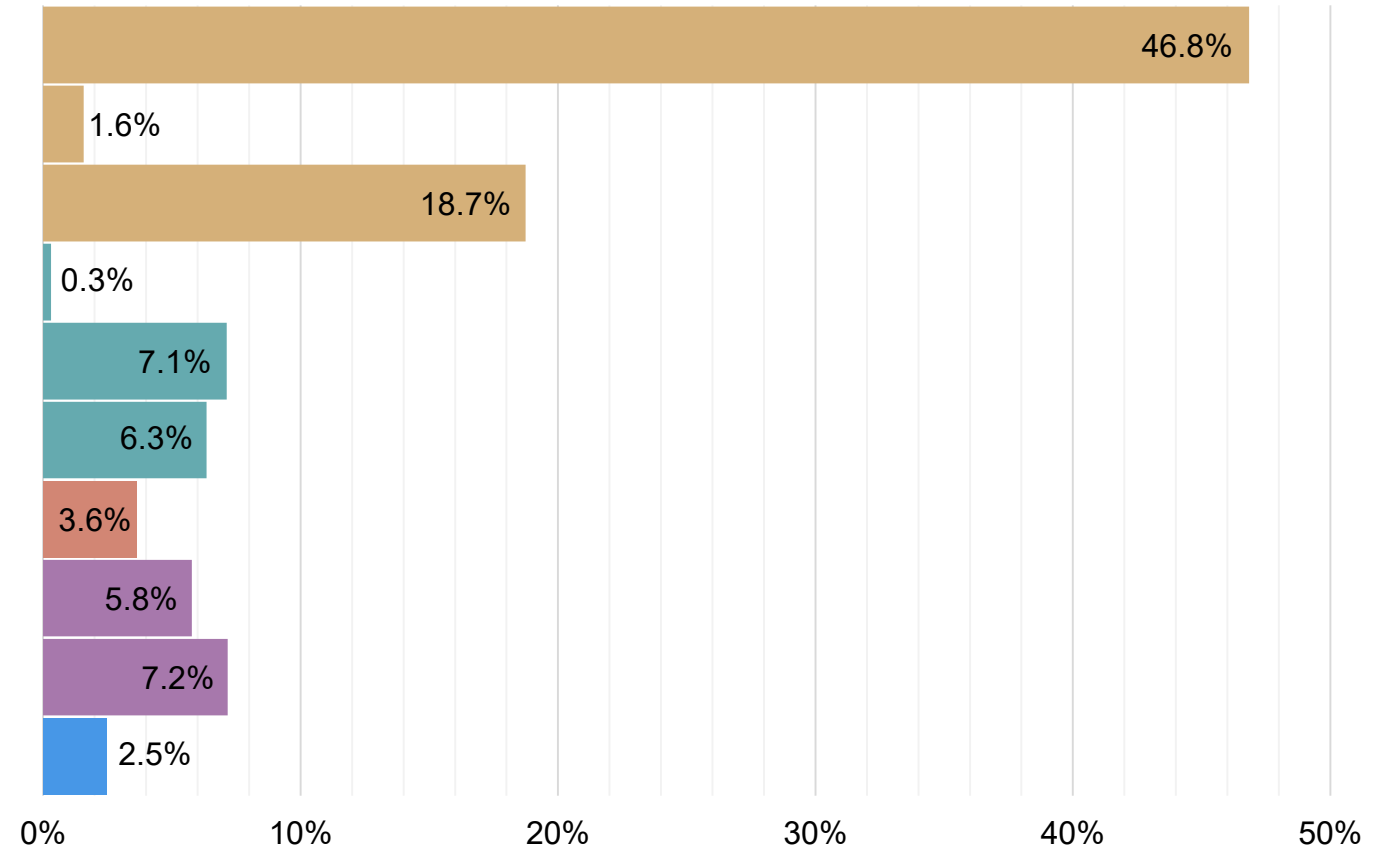
Significant funding changes compared to the FY 25 Existing Operating Budget

State General Fund	Interagency Transfers	Fees & Self-generated	Federal Funds
<p>\$241,336 increase primarily due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$194,943 increase in various standard statewide adjustments \$46,393 increase for a means of financing substitution to align self-generated revenues with historical collections 	<p>\$33,808 increase due to a means of financing substitution to align self-generated revenues with historical collections</p>	<p>\$63,157 net increase due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$220,580 for acquisitions and major repairs (\$157,624) decrease for a means of financing substitution to align self-generated revenues with historical collections 	<p>\$8 M net increase due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$8.1 M in various standard statewide adjustments (\$251,662) to reduce operating services to align with historical expenditures \$77,423 for a means of financing substitution to align self-generated revenues with historical collections

FY 26 EXPENDITURE RECOMMENDATION

Total Budget = \$102,161,943

Expenditure Category		
Salaries	\$	47,855,051
Other Compensation		1,611,066
Related Benefits		19,145,547
Travel		308,026
Operating Services		7,284,670
Supplies		6,479,130
Professional Services		3,709,737
Other Charges		5,902,889
Interagency Transfers		7,328,589
Acquisitions/Repairs		2,537,238
Total	\$	102,161,943



EXPENDITURE COMPARISON

Expenditure Category	FY 24 Actual Expenditures	FY 25 Existing Operating Budget 12/1/24	FY 26 HB1 Budget	Change Existing Operating Budget to HB1		Change Actual Expenditures to HB1	
Salaries	\$ 40,424,257	\$ 41,194,304	\$ 47,855,051	\$ 6,660,747	16.2%	\$ 7,430,794	18.4%
Other Compensation	1,705,511	1,611,066	1,611,066	0	0.0%	(94,445)	(5.5%)
Related Benefits	17,097,980	18,837,335	19,145,547	308,212	1.6%	2,047,567	12.0%
Travel	317,586	308,026	308,026	0	0.0%	(9,560)	(3.0%)
Operating Services	7,580,970	7,784,429	7,284,670	(499,759)	(6.4%)	(296,300)	(3.9%)
Supplies	6,785,372	6,267,203	6,479,130	211,927	3.4%	(306,242)	(4.5%)
Professional Services	3,244,760	3,674,622	3,709,737	35,115	1.0%	464,977	14.3%
Other Charges	2,067,770	6,019,499	5,902,889	(116,610)	(1.9%)	3,835,119	185.5%
Interagency Transfers	6,190,611	6,153,762	7,328,589	1,174,827	19.1%	1,137,978	18.4%
Acquisitions/Repairs	576,755	1,976,380	2,537,238	560,858	28.4%	1,960,483	339.9%
Total	\$ 85,991,572	\$ 93,826,626	\$ 102,161,943	\$ 8,335,317	8.9%	\$ 16,170,371	18.8%

SIGNIFICANT EXPENDITURE CHANGES

Compared to the FY 25 Existing Operating Budget

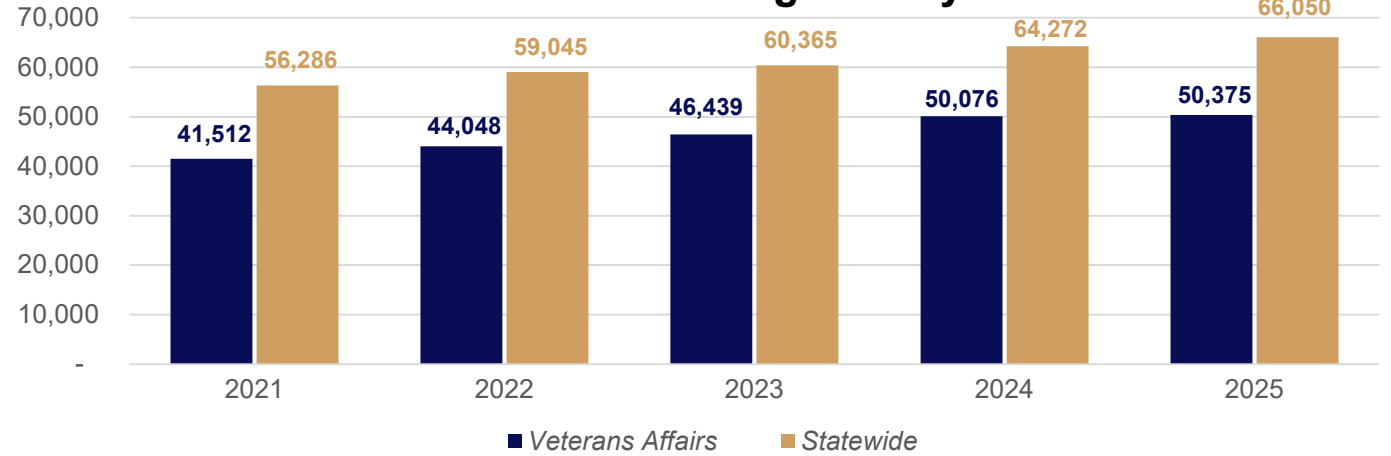
Personnel Services	IAT/Other Charges	Acquisitions/Repairs
<p>\$7 M increase due to various standard statewide adjustments to salaries including attrition, benefits, and retirement changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$2 M – Southeast Louisiana Veterans Home • \$1.8 M – Northeast Louisiana Veterans Home • \$1.5 M – Southwest Louisiana Veterans Home • \$1 M – Northwest Louisiana Veterans Home • \$618,797 – Louisiana Veterans Home • \$152,404 – Department of Veterans Affairs 	<p>\$1 M net increase due to items such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1.1 M for various standard statewide adjustments including fees, rent, Legislative Auditors, Civil Service Training, and Office of Technology Services • (\$116,610) to reduce funding for the Louisiana National Guard Disability Claims to align with expected expenditures 	<p>\$560,858 net increase due to items such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$2.5 M to provide for vehicles, equipment, and major repairs at the veterans homes • (\$1.5 M) to remove one-time funds associated with vehicles, equipment, and major repairs at the veterans homes and cemeteries • (\$521,076) to remove funding for acquisition purchases and major repairs budgeted in FY 25 that are no longer needed in FY 26

PERSONNEL INFORMATION

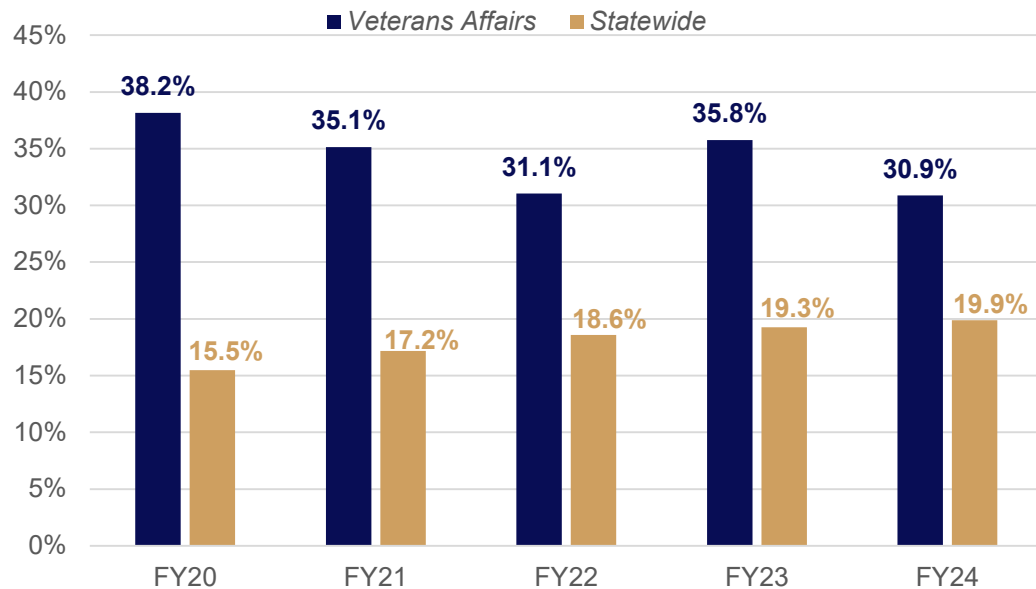
FY 2026 Recommended Positions

851	Total Authorized T.O. Positions (845 Classified, 6 Unclassified)
0	Authorized Other Charges Positions
0	Non-T.O. FTE Positions
80	Vacant Positions (December 30, 2024)

Historical Average Salary



Turnover History



Top Positions Vacated FY 2024

Position	Number of Employees	Separations	Turnover Rate
Nursing Assistant II	129	72	55.8%
Custodian II	34	24	70.6%
Licensed Practical Nurse III	93	15	16.1%
Food Service Specialist III	29	15	51.7%
Nursing Assistant I	12	12	100.0%

Source: Department of Civil Service

DEPARTMENT CONTACTS



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The seal of the State of Louisiana is visible in the background, featuring a pelican feeding its young in a nest, surrounded by the text "STATE OF LOUISIANA", "UNION • JUSTICE", and "CONFIDENCE".

General Department Information

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Administration Program

Office of the Secretary

- Handles the management for the activities, performance, and overall operation for the Department of Veterans Affairs
- **Military Family Assistance Fund** - addresses financial hardships of qualified veterans, Louisiana National Guardsmen, and Reservists and their dependents by paying for a variety of items such as food, housing, medical expenses, auto repair, and more



***Mission:** To provide comprehensive care and quality service to Louisiana's Veterans, and their families, with regard to health care, education, disability benefits, long-term care, and burial honors*

Human Resources

- Maintains all personnel records, regulates position classification, pay administration, hiring and firing, and employee relations for the department

Accounting and Purchasing

- Plans, prepares, and executes annual department operating budgets, and is responsible for requesting funds. It also maintains and controls financial records of receipts and disbursements

Training and Information

- Provides specialized classroom and field training to all newly appointed Veterans Assistance Counselors

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Appeals Division, Contact Assistance, and State Approval Agency Programs

Appeals Division

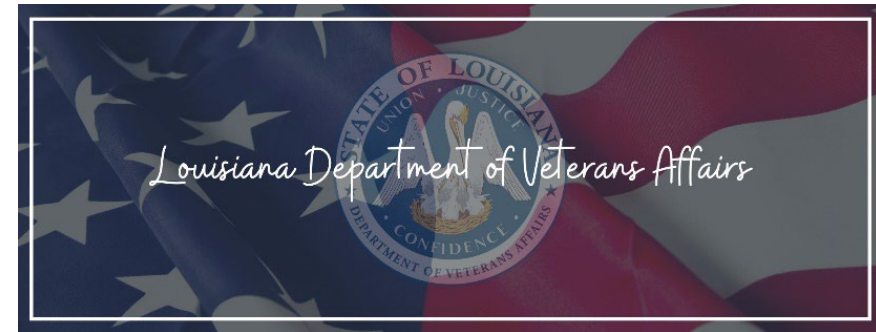
- Represents veterans and/or their dependents on claims for benefits to which they are entitled before rating boards of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and its Board of Vet Appeals
- Represents and advocates for veterans before all agencies administering programs that affect veterans

Contact Assistance

- Parish offices with veterans assistance counselors help process and develop claims to determine a veteran's eligibility for benefits
- Assists veterans and their families with various problems such as medical services, compensation, pension programs, education, home loans, employment, insurance, and additional benefits when a patient is in a nursing home

State Approval Agency

- Approves, supervises, and provides technical assistance to the institutions and training establishments for veterans
- Makes supervisory visits to all active schools, institutions of higher learning, non-college degree programs, job training programs and flight schools to ensure that the approved institutions are maintaining the approval criteria as approved and as set out in the Operation Plan and the Veterans Administration contract
- Conducts inspection visits on new schools seeking approval, and additional visits at the request of Veterans Affairs



DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Veterans Homes and Cemeteries

Veterans Homes

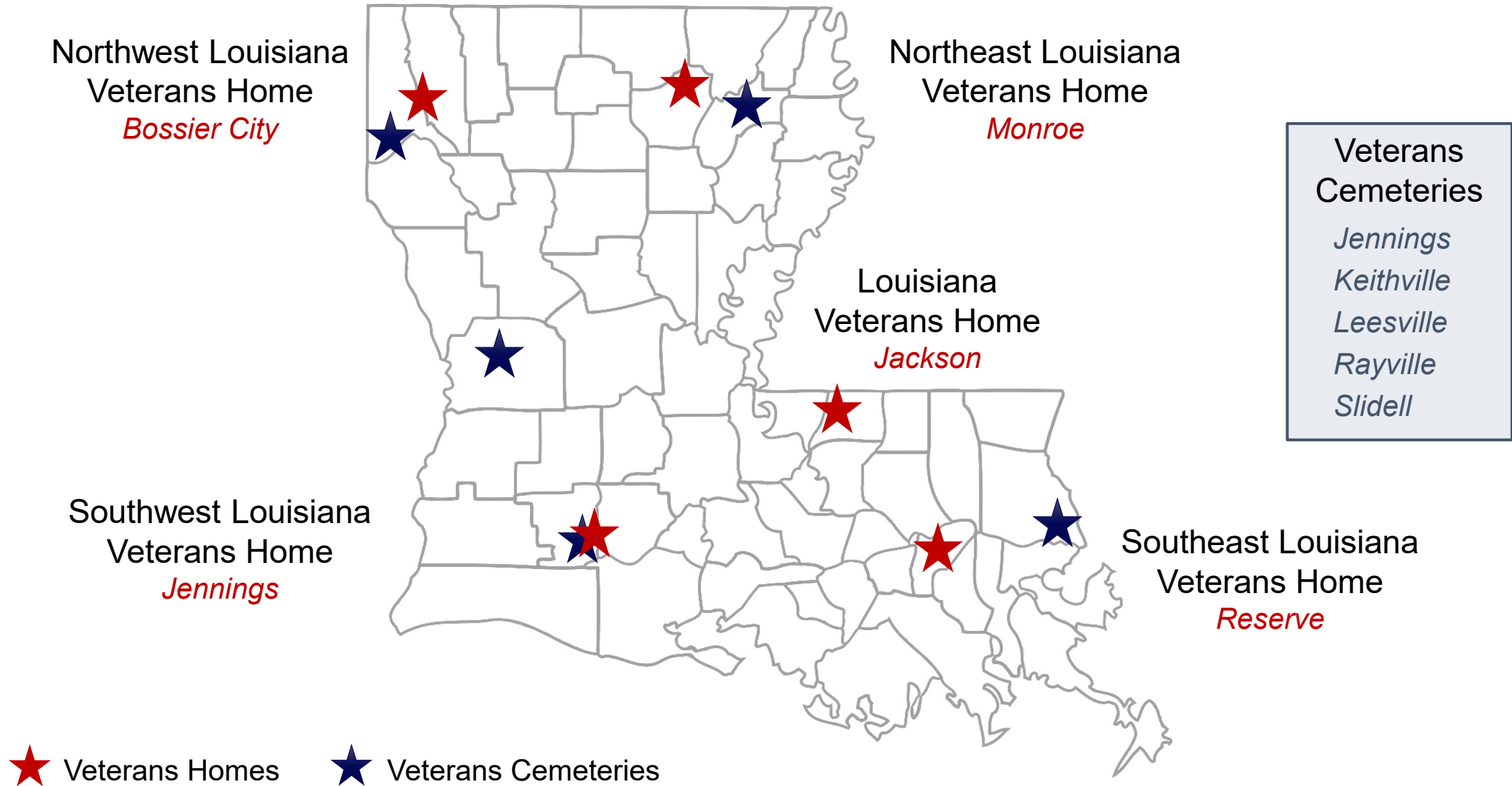
- Provides nursing care to eligible veterans in five veteran nursing homes
- Provides a variety of services including long-and short-term care, rehabilitative therapies, Alzheimer's care, skilled nursing, and centralized pharmacy services

Veterans Cemeteries

- The department constructs, operates, and maintains veterans cemeteries throughout Louisiana
- Available for eligible veterans, their spouses, and dependent children (at no charge for veteran burials)

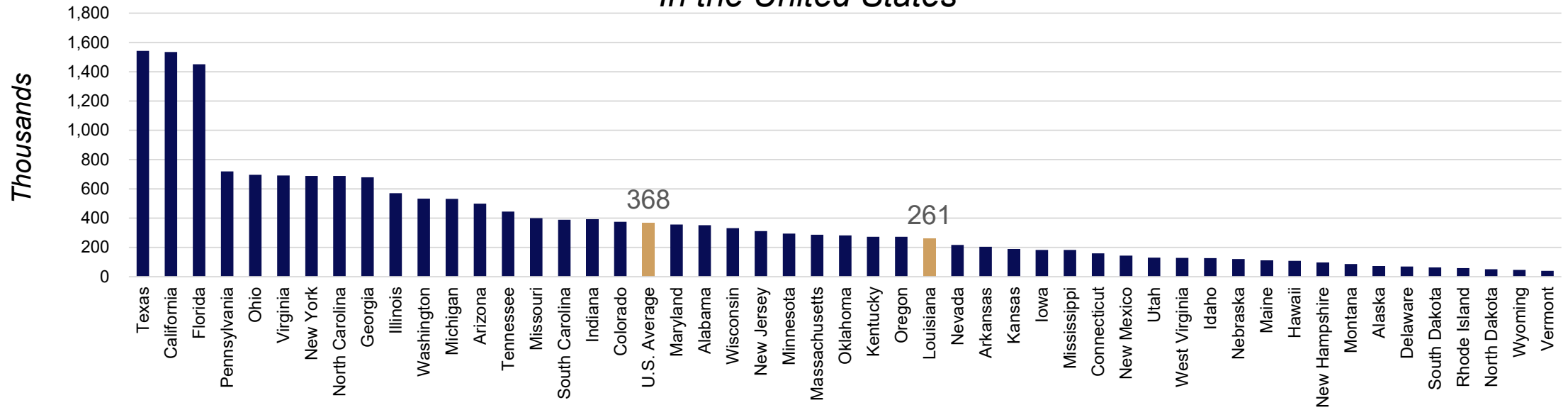


VETERANS HOMES AND CEMETERY LOCATIONS

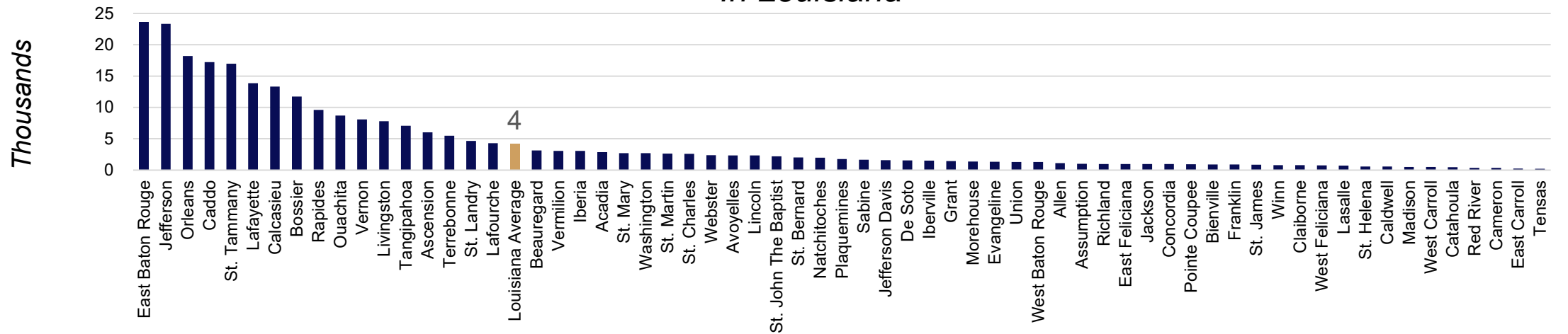


ESTIMATED NUMBER OF VETERANS

In the United States



In Louisiana



Source: Data from the National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics (FY 23), Office of Enterprise Integration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and LA Department of Veterans Affairs

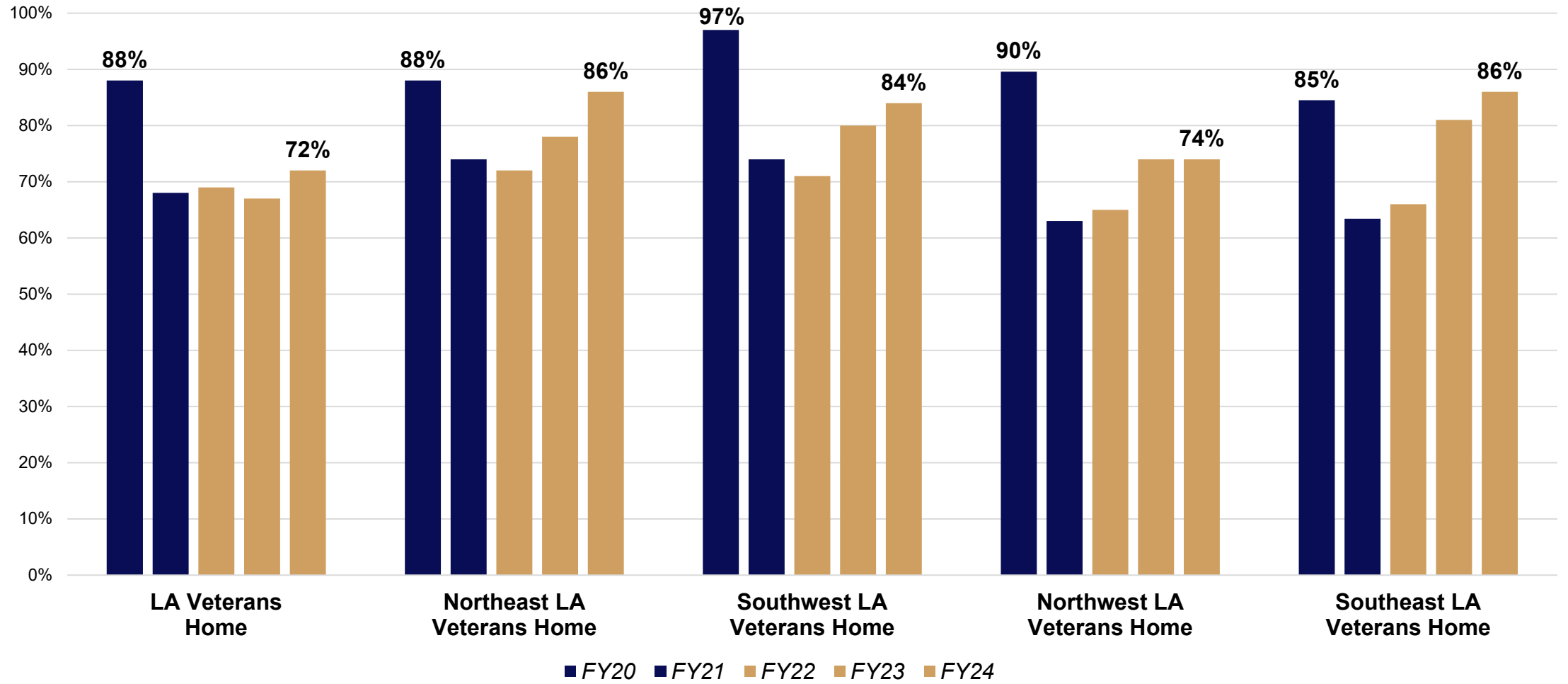
VETERANS HOME AVERAGE COST

Five-year historical averages of the five state run veterans homes

Averages	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22	FY 23	FY 24
Daily Census	131	103	103	114	120
Occupancy Rate	87%	68%	69%	76%	80%
Cost per Patient per Day	\$251	\$313	\$312	\$315	\$339
Cost per Patient per Year	\$91,615	\$114,245	\$113,880	\$114,975	\$123,826

Source: Average calculations based on the Office of Planning and Budget – Budget Supporting Documents and Performance Indicators

VETERANS HOMES OCCUPANCY RATES

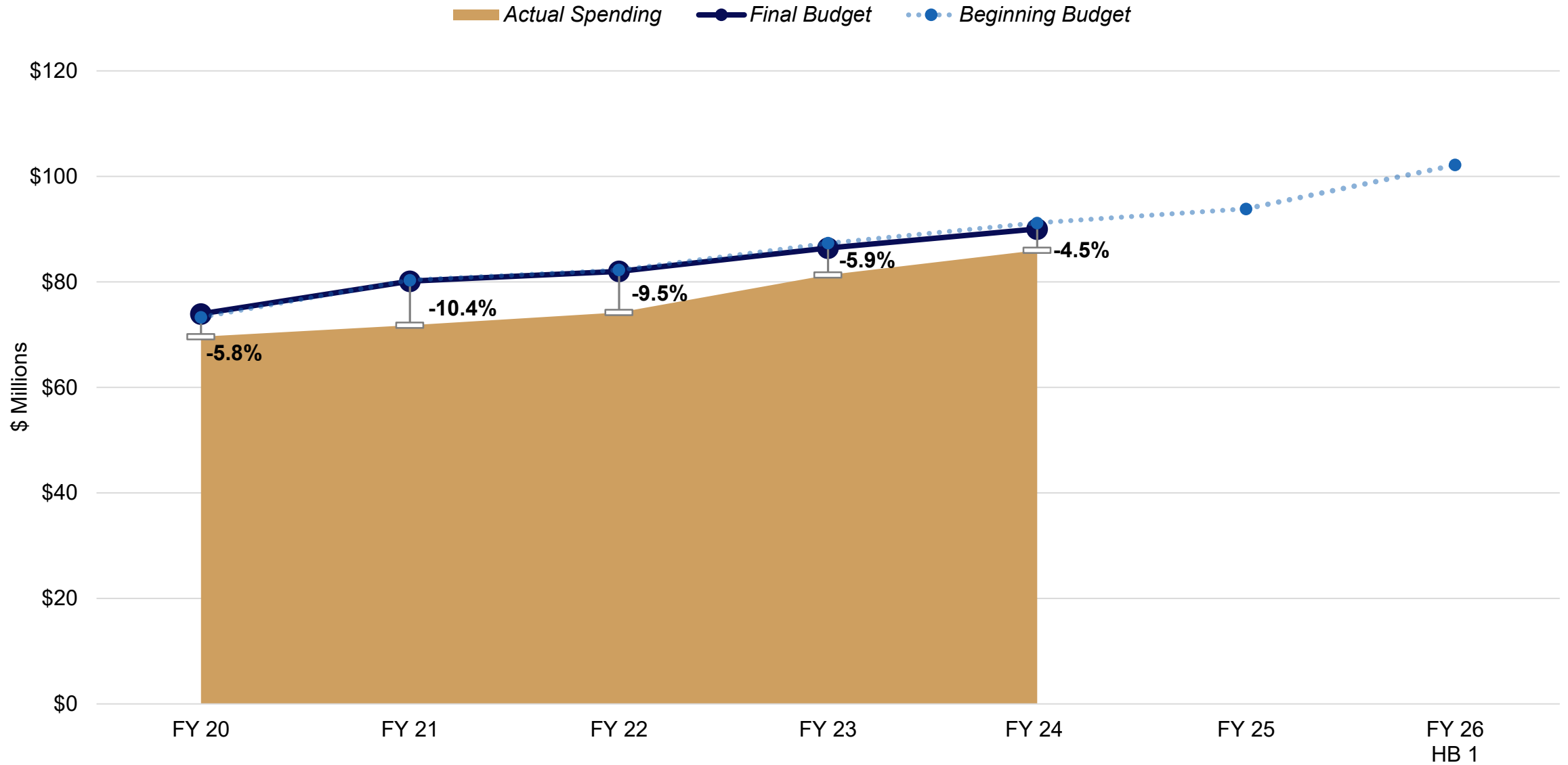


Source: Office of Planning and Budget – Budget Supporting Documents and Louisiana Performance Accountability System (LaPAS)

The seal of the State of Louisiana is visible in the background, featuring a pelican feeding its young in a nest, surrounded by the text "STATE OF LOUISIANA" and "UNION • JUSTICE • CONFIDENCE".

General Budgetary Information

HISTORICAL BUDGET



FY 25 EXISTING OPERATING BUDGET

The FY 2024-25 Existing Operating Budget (EOB) was frozen on December 1, 2024. This point-in-time reference is used in both the Executive Budget and the General Appropriations Bill.

Means of Finance	Appropriation	Mid-Year Adjustments	Existing Operating Budget
General Fund	\$ 16,344,885	\$ 521,076	\$ 16,865,961
Interagency Transfers	2,479,430	0	2,479,430
Self-generated Revenue	14,963,271	0	14,963,271
Statutory Dedications	215,528	0	215,528
Federal	59,302,436	0	59,302,436
Total	\$ 93,305,550	\$ 521,076	\$ 93,826,626

<i>Mid-year Adjustments Summary</i>				
July	August	September	October	November
No change	\$521,076 Various means of finance carried into FY 25 from the prior fiscal year for program expenses and contracts	No change	No change	No change

OTHER CHARGES / INTERAGENCY TRANSFERS

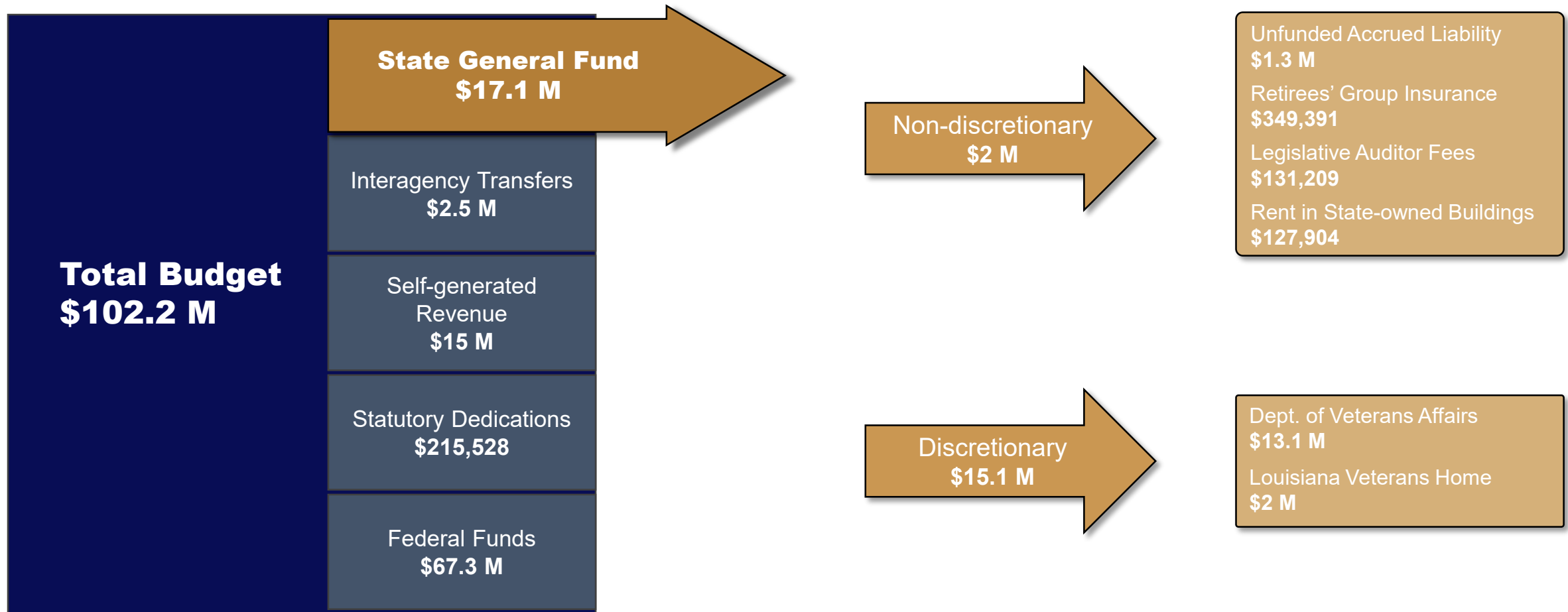
Other Charges

Amount	Description
\$ 3,594,271	Louisiana National Guard Disability Claims
1,499,600	"The Boot" initiative to recruit and retain transitioning military and veterans from across the United States including Louisiana
295,987	LaVet Corps
224,900	Gravestone Markers for Veterans Spousal Burials
215,528	Louisiana Military Assistance Fund
52,603	Military Honors Veterans Medals
20,000	Indigent Burials
\$ 5,902,889	Total Other Charges

Interagency Transfers

Amount	Description
\$ 2,591,904	Transfers within the department for services
2,163,445	Office of Technology Services (OTS)
1,679,712	Office of Risk Management (ORM)
272,557	Civil Service Fees
183,569	Transfers to other State Agencies for services
131,209	Legislative Auditor Fees
127,904	Rent in State-owned Buildings
61,150	Office of State Procurement (OSP)
39,505	Uniform Payroll System (UPS)
37,611	Office Space Lease
22,000	Administrative Program Support
13,805	Capitol Park Security Fees
3,286	State Treasury Fees
932	Louisiana Property Assistance Agency
\$ 7,328,589	Total Interagency Transfers

DISCRETIONARY EXPENSES



* Figures may not add precisely due to rounding *