



2020 Legislative Session(s) Legislative Report

The Highlights: Money

The Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCFS was allocated 25 additional positions and an additional \$1.7M in funding for child welfare. • Early Care and Education did not get any additional funds for child care assistance meaning that 4,000 children will lose their child care spots by the end of the year. • At this time, no CARES Act funding will be appropriated to helping families deal with the mental effects of Covid19, including those families who lost income and businesses due to being shut down. • Due to a standstill funding of the Judicial Budget, Louisiana CASA will take an approximately \$41K cut this year and local CASAs will also see their funding reduced throughout Louisiana. • Child Advocacy Centers received a new infusion of state general funds for the first time with a \$750K appropriation. • An additional \$2M in state general funds for an Early Literacy Program was allocated to the Department of Education.
Revenue Reductions	<p>Lawmakers sent bills totaling approximately \$25M in revenue reductions in upcoming fiscal year in the form of extended business tax credits, exemptions and incentive programs. Independent analysts estimate that these bills will cost up to \$230 million in lost tax collections over five years if they are signed by the Governor. These bills may pose a threat to the stability of the state budget. A detailed breakdown of these bills can be found here.</p>

The Highlights: Legislation

Platform Category	Legislation Overview	Bill Links
Physical Health & Development	Behavioral Health Death Reviews: Allows the LDH Office of Behavioral Health to monitor and review deaths of people receiving services through its offices.	HB240/Act 77

Platform Category	Legislation Overview	Bill Links
	Medicaid Telehealth: Requires LDH to develop policy and reimbursement guidance for Telehealth utilization under Medicaid.	HB589/Act88
	Crime Victim Funds: The law that dedicated unclaimed prize money to the expenses related to forensic exams and health care services for victims of sexually-oriented criminal offenses was expanded to allow victims of sexually-oriented crimes to recoup lost wages from the fund and expressly dedicates the revenue from unclaimed prize money to these services until the end of Fiscal Year 2022-2023.	HB584/Act 198
	Toxic Mold Task Force: Reestablishes the Louisiana Toxic Mold Task Force to lead development of comprehensive policies and promote best practices concerning mitigation and remediation of toxic mold and reducing the adverse health effects caused by this unique threat to public health.	HB665/Act 157
	Medical Marijuana Expansion: Expands the list of illnesses that can be treated with medical marijuana to any illness and expands the number of physicians that can recommend medical marijuana.	HB819/Act 286
Early Care & Education	Early Care Commission: Recreates the Early Childhood Care and Education Commission and adds additional members.	HB251/Act 180
	Dyslexia Screening & Services: Changes the legal definition of dyslexia to provide services to students under a broader understanding of the new law.	HB871/Act 296
	Mandatory Reporter Training: Requires teaching and child care providers to complete an annual training on mandatory reporter laws.	HB474/Act 272

Platform Category	Legislation Overview	Bill Links
	Criminal history records DOE: Adds the La. Dept. of Education as an entity to receive criminal history record and identification files and adds a definition for the term “FBI rap back system.”	HB602/Act 154
Social Emotional Development	Council on Children of Incarcerated Parents: Creates the Council on the Children of Incarcerated Parents and Caregivers.	HB729/Act 284
	Task Force on Protecting Children from Exposure to Pornography: Reconstitutes and extends the deadlines of the Task Force on Protecting Children from Exposure to Pornography.	SCR25
	Mandatory Reporters of Child Abuse: Provides that a mandatory reporter of child abuse has cause to suspect abuse if a child under the age of thirteen is pregnant.	SB433/Act 122
	Missing Children: Provides relative to the reporting duties of law enforcement with respect to information about missing children, revises the time period for which actions are required after the report of a missing child from 48 hours to immediately after the report is made to law enforcement.	HB29/Act 96
Developmental Disabilities	Policy for Long-Term Care Facility Residents: Directs the La. Department of Health to implement certain policies for the health and safety of long-term care facility residents.	HCR13
Child Welfare	CASA Background Checks: Authorizes CASA to receive FBI records on potential CASA volunteers.	HB204/Act 24
Family Economic Stability	Pink Tax Local Option: Authorizes an exemption from local sales taxes for feminine hygiene products and diapers.	HB328/Act 139

Covid-19

Legislation Overview	Bill Link
Limitations on Liability for People, Organizations, or Governments if the public is exposed to Covid-19. Includes non-profits, child care facilities, and organized faith-based groups.	HB826/Act 336
Requires the Department of Revenue to waive penalties and interest for certain taxpayers impacted by Covid-19 for tax years 2019 and 2020. Still pending Governor's signature.	HB37
Provides relative to limitations of liability for public and private school districts and postsecondary institutions during Covid-19. Still pending Governor's signature.	HB59
Request BESE to develop and provide online educational resources for the 2020 -2021 school year. Does not have to be signed by Governor to take effect.	SR38
Request BESE to adopt rules relative to the use of school property and personnel for athletic activities during the 2020-2021 school year. Does not have to be signed by Governor to take effect.	SR39
Requires Covid-19 testing be covered by health insurance coverage in Louisiana.	SB426/Act 230
Exempts from seizure payments received under governmental entities as a result of an outstanding emergency event.	SB450/Act 44

Rural Broadband

As a goal of creating more access to broadband internet in rural areas, legislation was considered in both sessions to address access issues for rural residents. Championing this legislation was Sen. Beth Mizell who offered stories of residents coming to the parking lot of her District Senate office so that they could access the internet from their cars. Since online learning and telehealth have become part of the Covid-19 landscape, the issue of rural access to high-speed internet (broadband) became more important than ever. SB406 was a bill considered during the regular session that impacted by special interests that change the original intent of the bill. As such, the Governor vetoed SB046 during the Special Session. [SB10](#) in Special Session was passed by both bodies and has been sent to the Governor for his consideration. The new version of the legislation addresses the concerns that led to the Governor's veto. The bill is still pending the Governor's signature.

Items That We Worked On That Didn't Make It, But Will Likely Be Brought Back in Some Form

Legislation Overview	Bill Link
School Lunch Shaming: Revising procedures relative to a student's inability to pay for school meals and a student's meal debt. The bill was pulled from consideration due to the Covid-19 break in session.	HB107
Family and Parental Leave: Provides relative to family and parental leave for state employees. The bill was pulled from consideration due to the Covid-19 break in session.	HB475
Maternal Health: Provides for health insurance coverage for maternity services provided by doulas. The bill was pulled from consideration due to the Covid-19 break in session.	HB502
Child Abuse: Provides relative to forensic examinations for minors in cases of child sexual abuse. The legislation passed unanimously in the House with co-authors and was killed in Senate committee.	HB610
Paid Family Leave: Provides for mandatory paid sick leave in companies with more than 20 employees and unpaid sick leave for companies with more than 2 employees. The bill was killed in House Labor after testimony by the Partnership and other family economic stability groups.	HB832
Equal Pay for Women: Requires any contractor who bids on or enters into a contract with a public entity to comply with the Louisiana Equal Pay for Women Act. Was pulled from consideration in Senate Finance.	SB77
ACE Evaluations in Schools: Requires certain assessments of a student prior to suspension from school. The bill was pulled from consideration due to the Covid-19 break in session.	SB128
Maternal Health: Provides for reasonable accommodations for employees due to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions in the workplace. The bill was pulled from consideration due to the Covid-19 break in session.	SB287

Legislation Overview	Bill Link
<p>ACA Lawsuit: Requests the attorney general to withdraw the state of Louisiana from the lawsuit challenging the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA). The bill was defeated in House Insurance. Still a live issue depending on when the U.S. Supreme Court schedules the oral arguments on the lawsuit challenging the ACA currently known as Texas v. U.S. in the lower courts and now California v. Texas as it goes before the Supreme Court. You can read more about the lawsuit here.</p>	<p>HR42</p>

Emerging Trends/Issues Still Likely for Fall Special Session or Regular Session 2021

- Adoption Process Reform. Rep. Rick Edmonds had a number of bills relating to adoption process and law that were shelved because of the Covid-19 shortened session.
- Baby Box. There is continued interest in authorizing boxes to be mounted on the exterior of buildings for the anonymous surrender of infants.
- Anti-Vaccination Legislation. There is continued interest in anti-vaccination legislation under the guise of patient choice and personal liberty in contravention of the advice of pediatricians and public health experts.
- Regulation of Family Day Homes. There were a number of bills filed during the regular session that contemplated regulations around family day homes. Current law stipulates that a person who takes up to six unrelated children into their home to provide child care services is not required to be registered or licensed by the state.
- Early Literacy. While the original legislation with respect to early childhood literacy failed to advance during the regular session, Senate Finance made a special appropriation of over \$2M in state general funds to the Department of Education for the early literacy program. There will likely be additional legislation to direct the spending of those funds.
- School-to-Prison Pipeline. Rep. Jason Hughes is interested in looking at student discipline. These efforts combined with efforts by Sen. Barrow to address Adverse Childhood Events in student behavior will likely emerge again as there is an equity discussion around student discipline and the disparate impacts on children of color.