



20 DAYS TO GO

June 6 is coming in hot

You know the end is near when the governor begins endorsing bills.

That's what Gov. **John Bel Edwards** started doing today — signing his first batch of bills from the regular session. Roughly a dozen or so low-profile measures received his seal of approval, with more awaiting further review on his desk.

At the same time, Senate leaders spent the day preparing for the session's big budget bills, which will be heard on the floor tomorrow afternoon. Senators want to get their amendments squared away and the bills back to the House as soon as possible. (That will allow lawmakers to address any possible vetoes from the governor while they're still in session.)

On the other side of Memorial Hall, in the House, representatives advanced one of the more controversial instruments of the session — SB 44 by Sen. **Beth Mizell**, or the Fairness in Womens Sports Act. The vote was 72-21, with 12 members absent. Transgender athletes would be prohibited from participating in girls' sports, according to the bill, which generated an emotional debate today.

Another emotional issue on the move involves abortion policies. The House Health and Welfare Committee passed two bills this morning: SB 342 by Sen. **Katrina Jackson** to increase certain criminal penalties for abortion providers, if Roe v. Wade is overturned, and SB 388 by Sen. **Sharon Hewitt** to ban out-of-state prescribers from providing patients with abortion-inducing meds.

With just 20 days remaining in the regular session, these controversial and emotional social issues are headed for final passage or conference committees right alongside the main budget bills. Luckily, lawmakers have prioritized the latter, which will leave plenty of time for everything else.

Have a friend who should be receiving *The Tracker*?

Have a news tip?

**Visit www.LouisianaTracker.com
or hit up JJA@LaPolitics.com!**

Sponsored content underwritten by Harris, DeVille & Associates

Cornerstone Honors U.S. Military Service Members

HDA client Cornerstone in Waggaman powers innovation that helps the U.S. military fly faster. As the Official Military Sponsor of the Zurich Classic of New Orleans golf tournament held at TPC Louisiana in Avondale April 20-24, 2022, Cornerstone had the unique opportunity to honor our men and women in the U.S. military through a host of events.

Among other tournament activities, Cornerstone sponsored a military appreciation program during the opening ceremonies. They sponsored the Callaway Golf Warrior Club Fitting during which two wounded warriors were custom fitted for a set of golf clubs. Cornerstone also provided an opportunity for military personnel to meet and caddie with PGA Tour professionals, and the company sponsored free tickets for active-duty Military personnel and veterans to attend the tournament.

The acrylonitrile produced at Cornerstone is used in vehicles, aircraft, and a host of other applications by the U.S. Military. For example, its acrylonitrile goes into the carbon fibers that make up the wings of the U.S. military's

F-35 fighter plane, helping it fly faster and ensure dominance in flight for decades to come. As part of Cornerstone's commitment to its employees and local community, the company was honored to support our men and women in the U.S. Military through such a great event.

POLITICAL CHATTER

- **BILLS THAT PASSED:** SB 418 by Sen. **Stewart Cathey** to repeal the state's "Raise the Age" law, and allow law enforcement to send 17-year-olds to adult detention, passed the Senate 29-8 today... HB 774 by Rep. **Cedric Glover** to make certain marijuana-related convictions easier to expunge was also advanced by the House 78-19... HB 427 by Rep. **Beryl Amedee** to strengthen parental confirmation rules for vaccines at schools was approved by the House too, by a vote of 65-31... The House likewise gave an 81-6 vote to HB 31 by Rep. **Phillip Tarver**, a constitutional amendment to use nonrecurring revenue for supplemental pay...
- **BILLS THAT DIDN'T PASS:** HB 747 and HB 1014 by Rep. **Ray Garofalo**, two bills that sought to address critical race theory, were involuntarily deferred by the House Education Committee... Falling one vote shy of passage in the House today was HB 29 by Rep. **Richard Nelson**, a constitutional amendment to apply surplus dollars automatically to unfunded accrued liability...
- **RESIGNED:** Rep. **Danny McCormick** resigned from the House Civil Law Committee this week and questioned the chair's ethics because he felt members weren't taking one of his bills seriously. The bill in question sought to allow the state of Louisiana to ignore the highest court in the American judicial system on matters related to one case.
- **HIRED:** **Tyler M. Bosworth**, the legislative analyst for the House Natural Resources Committee, has been hired as the new advocacy director for the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana.
- **TREASURER ON AUDIT:** Treasurer **John Schroder** released the following comments on the latest audit report on the Main Street Recovery Grant Program, which has provided \$262 million in federal pandemic relief dollars to more than 20,000 Louisiana business owners: "At the program's inception, the industry standard for governmental programs was a 7 percent fraud and waste rate. When selecting a vendor, we were adamant that the program's fraud and

waste rate would be no more than 3 percent. By design, we worked with Legislative Auditor's office, embedding them in the program and thereby enabling us to respond promptly as fraud was detected. This collaboration contributed to our reduced overall fraud rate of 1.32 percent. We continue to aggressively pursue the fraudsters. Industry averages told us to expect expected thefts of \$8 million. Instead, we minimized fraud to \$1.1 million and have recovered more than \$400,000 to date. We did not compromise speed or efficiency. I refuse to punish the 98.7 percent with unnecessary of bureaucratic red tape to stop the 1.32 percent."

- **URGING CAUTION:** Treasurer **John Schroder** also released a statement this week advising the Legislature to be cautious about increasing recurring expenditures based on the additional money recognized by the Revenue Estimating Conference. "Three of the next four fiscal years will have a decrease in revenue according to the REC, and the State General Fund Five-Year Forecast shows deficits approaching \$700 million by FY 26," Schroder said. "Reductions of that magnitude would largely fall on higher education and health care to balance the budget... Excess funds should be used in a manner that will reduce future state budget pressures when revenue inevitably decreases. The .45 sales tax rolls off in FY 26. If we don't plan for that now, we will have some deep cuts."
- **POLICE WEEK:** Congresswoman **Julia Letlow** and Mississippi Congressman **Michael Guest** have introduced a resolution to recognize National Police Week and pay tribute to the 619 officers, including 10 Louisianans, who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty over the past year.
- **IN THE COURTS:** Via AG PR: "Louisiana Attorney General **Jeff Landry** has joined Connecticut Attorney General **William Tong** and other state attorneys general in two amicus briefs defending affordable drug prices before the United States Courts of Appeals for the Third Circuit and District of Columbia."
- **MEETING TOMORROW:** Lt. Gov. **Billy Nungesser**, as chairman, will lead tomorrow's meeting of the Governor's Special Committee for the Anti-Litter Task Force. With 26 members, the committee is preparing a report of recommendations and accomplishments since the initiative began earlier this year. The meeting begins at 9 am at the Capitol Park Museum.

- **LOOK ALIVE!:** And do so at "Live at the Varsity," tomorrow night at 7 pm at (you guessed it) the Varsity. As always, you need a pin to get in.
- **THURSDAY EVENT:** The Louisiana First Foundation's fundraiser at the Governor's Mansion is Thursday at 5 pm.
- **SUNDAY IN THE SWAMP:** Sen. **Sharon Hewitt**, who's eyeing a run at governor, has a fundraiser in Slidell (a crawfish boil and swamp tour event) scheduled for May 22 at 3:30 pm at Cajun Encounters.
- **LOOKING AHEAD:** One week from today, on May 24, **Josh McAllister**, a candidate for sheriff of Winn Parish, will have an event at noon at Pelican State Partners.

HEADLINES & BYLINES

- The Advertiser: Will Louisiana Congressman **Garret Graves** run for governor? He's unimpressed with field
- The Advertiser: Congresswoman **Julia Letlow**: Here's what it means to join the Appropriations Committee
- Illuminator: House lawmakers reject vaccine reporting requirement for coroners
- KHN: Why So Slow? Legislators Take on Insurers' Delays in Approving Prescribed Treatments
- WWNO: What is the 'social cost of carbon,' and why is AG **Jeff Landry** urging the Supreme Court to stop it?
- The Advertiser: Owners of electric vehicles, hybrids may have to pay an annual fee to use Louisiana roads
- Manship: House committee advances a bill prohibiting vaccine discrimination
- Manship: House committee approves two abortion restriction bills

- LRN: House Civil Law Committee supports bill to ban hair discrimination
- KTBS: Gov. **John Bel Edwards'** trip to climate conference cost Louisiana taxpayers \$42,000
- Center Square: Louisiana's Higher Ed Foundations Topped \$4B in Assets in 2020
- The Advocate: Louisiana now last in the U.S. in equity-rich homes, second-worst rate of homes seriously underwater
- KNOE: Louisiana lawmaker seeks funds toward Amtrak route along I-20 corridor
- Reveille: Louisiana Senate committee reduces proposed faculty raises, approves money for LSU cybersecurity program

**Have a friend who should be receiving *The Tracker*?
Have a birthday or anniversary to share?
Visit www.LouisianaTracker.com
or hit up JJA@LaPolitics.com!**

Our History (Circa 1960s)

The Number of Senators in Lafayette

Just to show us once again there are truly no new issues at the Capitol, our friends at the State Archives dipped into the William A. Delgado Collection for a clip that dates back to the mid 1960s, but sounds like it could have been recorded this year.

That's because the interview with late state Sen. **Dudley "Coozan Dud" LeBlanc** focused partly on a big feud that was brewing amongst Acadiana lawmakers over the number of Senate seats that should be assigned to Lafayette.

Of course, a similar conversation was had during this year's redistricting process, as lawmakers from Iberia, Lafayette, St. Martin and other parishes jockeyed to redraw the latest Senate map.

This week's clip, which features similar chatter from Coozan Dud, was likely filmed between the 1964 and 1965 regular sessions, when LeBlanc chaired a committee that oversaw redistricting activities.

WATCH THE VIDEO

This history feature was made possible by the office of Secretary of State Kyle Ardoin.

WHAT YOU MISSED IN LW

Here's a summary of some of the stories from the latest issue of [LaPolitics Weekly](#):

- **A WORKING WEEKEND:** With just three weeks remaining in the regular session, senators worked Sunday in an effort to keep the budget package moving. The leadership hopes to send the spending bills to Gov. **John Bel Edwards** early, in case they're able to override any vetoes while in Baton Rouge...
- **#LaGOV TIMELINES:** We're 16 months away from Louisiana's next open race for governor and nowhere close to having a settled field of candidates. By this point in any open contest for the state's top gig, there would normally be a horde of politicians boxing each other out and making big announcements. By now, voters should have a good idea who will qualify for governor. Instead, we have a field of at least 11 politicians who are in various stages of making a final decision...
- **LETLOW WILL HAVE EYE ON AG:** As a new appropriator, Congresswoman **Julia Letlow** said she would prioritize education and rural broadband, but admitted agriculture would be among the most important policy areas for her. Prior to this week, Letlow was a member of the House Agriculture Committee, an important seat for her district. But the Appropriations gig doesn't allow for other committee work...
- **Q&A WITH CONGRESSMAN MIKE JOHNSON:** "Right now, we're investing a great deal of time in my work on the National Defense Authorization Act — the annual legislation that establishes and funds our country's defense policy," Johnson said in last week's *LaPolitics*

Q&A. "The 2022 marathon markup for that legislation is quickly approaching in June, and my staff and I have been working for months to ensure that the critical interests of our state are once again represented and funded."

- **YOUR FALL PREVIEW:** A review of the November ballot, from congressional contests down to mayoral elections...
- **NEW WAYS TO HUNT & FISH:** The Legislature is getting behind a pair of bills that would create new ways for sportsmen to hunt and fish in Louisiana. The bills, if adopted, would allow for the taking of deer using air rifles, permit the hand-grabbing or noodling of catfish and create an entirely new framework for the use of bream as bait...
- **LOOKING LOCAL:** New mayor pro tem in Vidalia... Livingston Council passes moratorium on developments... Calcasieu School Board looking for new superintendent... *Houma Courier* ending Sunday print edition...
- **HISTORY: Frank W. Summers**, the eighteenth chief justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court, served in that capacity from January 1, 1979, to February 29, 1980. He rose to chief justice during a period marked by a rapid expansion of caseloads at all levels of the judiciary...
- **THEY SAID IT:** "Is any law really set in stone in this building?" — Rep. **Nicky Muscarello**, on the House floor

Wish you could have read these stories last week?

Not yet a subscriber to *LaPolitics Weekly*?

[Click here and sign up!](#)

Sponsored content underwritten by Harris, DeVille & Associates

***HDA Client Ochsner Health Expanding
Access in North Louisiana***

The Ochsner LSU system partnership is constantly expanding access points for healthcare and has developed more than 11 newly renovated outpatient

clinics, as well as a multi-specialty medical office building to increase access to care for new and existing patients. These investments include the Academic Medical Center in Shreveport, the St. Mary Medical Center, the Monroe Medical Center, a new behavioral health facility, and more. Ochsner LSU Health System is working to expand access to primary and specialty care, as well as emergency and cancer care, in north Louisiana, which means patients can receive quality care for all needs close to home. Additionally, Ochsner LSU Health provides opportunities for advance training, education and research for the next generation of healthcare providers.

In three years of partnership, Ochsner LSU Health has enhanced the workforce by more than 800 full-time employees, increased patient care in clinics by more than 20 percent, created affiliations with critical rural healthcare systems, invested more than \$200 million in capital improvements and expanded safe and convenient virtual visits.

Ochsner LSU Health System is transforming healthcare across North Louisiana.

SOCIALLY YOURS

ANNIVERSARIES & WEDDING BELLS

- **Donna Kopowski** and **Lenny Kopowski** are toasting to 14 years together... **Julie Ivey** and **Rep. Barry Ivey** are celebrating 24 years of marriage...

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, TRACKERS!

- Tuesday, May 17: Late Gov. **Richard Leche** (1898)
- Wednesday, May 18: **Rhonda Reap-Curiel, Blake Canfield, Kirby Goidel, Ari Krupkin, Robin Winchell** and **Matt Gresham**
- Thursday, May 19: **Jim Funk, Rebekah Allen** and **Brian Angelle**
- Friday, May 20: Sen. "**Big Mike**" **Fesi**, Sen. **Ed Price**, Rep. **Alan Seabaugh**, Rep. **Raymond Crews**, Rep. **Richard Nelson**, **Mark Lambert, Alicia Breaux, Dean Vicknair, Stephen Handwerk, Karen Profita** and **Robert Hollins**
- Saturday, May 21: **Ross White, Cloyce Clark** and **Christopher Tidmore**

- Sunday, May 22: **Chris Vidrine** and **Clare Stagg**
- Monday, May 23: **Meg Garvey, Frank Neuner** and **Sallie DuPont**
- Who We Missed: **Rachael Feigley** (May 14)

**Do you enjoy reading *The Tracker*?
Then you'll love *LaPolitics Weekly*.**

**Sign up for the trade publication
elected officials, campaign professionals and lobbyists
have trusted for 29 years.**

Visit www.LaPoliticsWeekly.com.

THE END.