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## STRESSIN' THE SESSION

*On the clock for bill filings...*

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You may not want to hear this, but the regular session convenes in just 12 days. Moreover, a couple of filing deadlines are coming this week and lawmakers with available bills are a hot commodity.

The number of bills are stacking up quickly, with 294 bills filed in the House and 76 in the Senate. More bills are certainly on the way, with lawmakers and lobbyists alike relying on staff to pick up the pace.

You can tell time is running thin — already there are roughly two dozen lawmakers trying to squeeze in fundraisers over the next week. (For those scheduled for today, see "POLITICAL CHATTER" below.)

Policy topics are evolving as well.

Adding to the mix of high-profile tax issues, Rep. **Philip DeVillier** has a new proposal that uses sales taxes on food, residential utilities and drugs to get rid of other taxes, like income. On insurance, Senate Chair **Kirk Talbot** is pushing to make the insurance commissioner appointed rather than elected.

There are even some suggestions in the wind about possible committee changes heading into the session, but so far there hasn't been any news on that front.

Subscribers to [www.LaPoliticsWeekly.com](http://www.LaPoliticsWeekly.com) received the first installment in a two-part series last week previewing the session. (More on that below under "WHAT YOU MISSED.") For the second part of the preview, including interviews with committee chairs, watch for the next issue later this week!

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## **Sovereignty Solves Economic Development *Part III***

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### **Tribal Governance & Self-Determination**

Affirmation of federally recognized tribes' inherent right to govern their economic interests has led to self-governance policies that better support the preservation of cultural identity and heritage and address specific socio-economic challenges faced by tribe members due to centuries of attempted colonization and forced assimilation (cultural erasure). *The power of self-determination in building sustainable economies in Indian Country*, Patrice H. Kunesh (Economic Policy Institute, June 2022). For example, the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act is an economic policy allowing sovereignty and self-governance for a carve-out economic drive among tribes with grant lands that support gaming.

"The nation's 574 federally recognized tribes have authority over more than 60 million acres within the 325 Indian reservations and other lands under the jurisdiction of the tribes. Tribal governments and their enterprises directly employ almost 350,000 workers and indirectly support an additional

600,000 jobs and generate \$40 billion per year in wages and benefits along with an additional \$9 billion spillover impact in state and regional economies." *ibid.*

Today, the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana's tribal government is headquartered in Elton, Louisiana. It consists of an elected five-member council: a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary-Treasurer, and two more council members. They oversee government and business-related functions, including a police and fire department, courthouse, medical facilities, and tribal government buildings and employees. The governmental autonomy of the tribe, through its sovereign status, allows the tribe to own and operate its Coushatta Casino Resort in Kinder, Louisiana, employing more than 2500 local residents, including eight restaurants, and four hotels, its award-winning golf course, along with the largest casino in the state, serving as one of the top five largest private employers in Southwest Louisiana.

Sovereign status allows for governance, policy negotiations on taxation, and other economic autonomy that supports tribe members and the surrounding community. Sovereignty is an economic principle rooted in recognizing cultural values that have transformed Allen parish and the surrounding community for the better.

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## POLITICAL CHATTER

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- **HAMMER TIME:** Congresswoman **Julia Letlow** was wielding the gavel on Capitol Hill yesterday, first presiding over the House Appropriations Committee's subcommittee budget hearing with Health and Human Services Secretary **Xavier Becerra** and later presiding over the House Floor during debate on Majority Leader **Steve Scalise's** HR 1.
- **BUDGET DOC:** Here's an [overview](#) of the FY24 executive budget prepared by the Louisiana Legislative Fiscal Office.
- **MELINDA'S MORNING REPORT:** Via PAR's [@MelindaDeslatte](#): "Want to know how much Louisiana's cabinet secretaries, state education superintendent and higher education leaders make each year? [Here's a salary chart](#) with vehicle/housing allowances included (where applicable)."
- **TODAY'S EVENTS:** Rep. **Rodney Lyons** as a noon luncheon at Longview... Reps. **Kyle Green** and **Matt Willard** have at 5:30 p.m.

event at the Beer League... Rep. **Scott McKnight** has a 6 p.m. event at the Shreveport Club (RSVP: [maryelise@mcknightforla.com](mailto:maryelise@mcknightforla.com))...

- **TODAY'S MEETINGS:** The budget meetings continue at the Capitol on this Wednesday with 9 a.m. meetings for both the Appropriations and Finance committees.

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**HEADLINES & BYLINES**

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- The Advocate: 350,000 Louisianans could soon lose Medicaid coverage. Here's what to know.
- Daily Advertiser: Louisiana rep whose granddaughter uses AR-15 rifle files concealed carry expansion
- The Advocate: Amid Louisiana's insurance crisis, lawmakers aim to loosen barriers for wary companies
- WVLA: Legislators balance protecting insurance consumers, appeasing companies
- The Advocate: **Jeff Landry** goes to Washington to testify against **Joe Biden**

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## WHAT YOU MISSED IN LW

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Here's what you missed in the latest issue of LaPolitics Weekly, published last week...

- **HERE COMES THE SESSION**: (First in a two-part session preview) Money will be among the driving themes of the regular session that convenes April 10. From how much lawmakers can spend in the current budget year and the next to how much they should expend on their own salaries, senators and representatives will soon take a deep dive into the dollars and cents of state government...
- **PAY RAISE SESSION**: In addition to the proposed legislative pay raise, Speaker Pro Term **Tanner Magee** said this week Capitoland observers should keep a close eye on a salary hike proposal for teachers and a suggested boost in supplemental pay for law enforcement. With sketchy financial times possible for Louisiana on the horizon, many conservatives are planning to have a robust conversation about whether the state can sustain so many pay bumps in the future...
- **LFF UPDATE**: This session will be a busy one for the Louisiana Family Forum, said President **Gene Mills**. Churches will push a constitutional amendment that gives them more autonomy when it comes to emergency orders, like those issued during the COVID-19

scare. LFF boosters also plan to engage on the evolving library boards issue and will defend against abortion exceptions. "We want to make sure there aren't any hitchhikers on that," said Mills...

- **SWITCHING BACK:** Rep. **Mandie Landry**, who recently switched from Democrat to no party, announced this morning she has switched from no party back to Democrat. In a statement she said she had a point to make, but her ideology never changed. Rep. **Sam Jenkins**, chair of the Democratic Caucus, was pleased to hear the news. "The task before us is great, and we are proud to have Rep. Landry in our corner," he said. "She is a fighter, a vital member of our caucus, and an important voice in Louisiana's legislature." Landry has fielded an early re-election challenge from **Madison O'Malley**, a small business owner and a registered Dem...
- **SHOP TALK:** 3 Non-Political Skills Every Campaign Manager Needs
- **HISTORY ("Great Senate Speeches"):** Late Gov. **John McKeithen** is remembered by many for his outsized personality and large stature, which earned him the enduring nickname of "Big John." During his two terms in office, McKeithen was regarded as the wizard of the Capital Outlay process, frequently delivering on big projects such as the Superdome...
- **THEY SAID IT:** "We spend money faster than the speed of light." — *Congressman **Mike Johnson**, on federal spending, on the House floor*

Wish you would have read these stories last week? Subscribe today to [www.LaPoliticsWeekly.com](http://www.LaPoliticsWeekly.com).

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[Our History:](#)

# America's 1st Black Lt. Gov.

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[In an article published by Atlas Obscura](#), Louisiana's own **Oscar Dunn** is described as "America's forgotten first black lieutenant governor." The argument is made, by writer **Chelsea Adams**, that Dunn was a New Orleans pioneer whose own legacy was overshadowed. Dunn served in office in Louisiana from 1865 to 1871. When he died in 1871, \$10,000 was appropriated by the Legislature to build a monument to honor him, but the money was never spent. Here's an excerpt from that article, focusing primarily on Adams's work covering Dunn's later years:

*Dunn was nominated for the post of lieutenant governor by **P. B. S. Pinchback**, a black carpetbagger from Ohio and supporter of **Henry C. Warmoth**, who was elected governor in 1868. Dunn had serious reservations about running on the ticket with Warmoth, whom he felt would only use him to secure favor among black voters.*

*Dunn won the lieutenant governorship, despite being opposed by Democratic and independent candidates. He presided over the Louisiana State Legislature's civil rights bills and the ratification of the 14th Amendment, which granted citizenship to anyone born or naturalized in the United States, including former slaves. Warmoth ultimately betrayed Dunn by vetoing a civil rights bill that would have offered protections for black Americans.*

*Warmoth ultimately lost power. The Democrats wouldn't support a Northern carpetbagger and Radical Republicans wouldn't support a governor who didn't work to bring protections for black people. There was talk of impeachment, which would have left Dunn as governor, but Dunn died before the governor's impeachment trial.*

*In 1869, and during his tenure as lieutenant governor, Dunn traveled to Washington D.C. where he sat for a portrait by **Mathew Brady**, the famed Civil War battlefield photographer. The portrait is one of the few remaining pictures that exist of Dunn. While in Washington, Dunn also had an audience with newly elected president **Ulysses S. Grant**, where he discussed political appointments.*

*Even though he was out of the Reconstructionist South, Dunn encountered mistreatment during his visit to the North. He wasn't granted a sleeping car on a train, he was forced to share quarters with staff in a Philadelphia hotel while his white traveling companions were granted rooms and, as a joke, brokers hired a barber to impersonate the lieutenant governor during a visit to the New York Stock Exchange.*

*"The hoax at the New York Stock Exchange further elaborated the disrespect and maltreatment that the Lieutenant-Governor was subjected to as he visited the north," **Brian K. Mitchell** wrote in his dissertation on Dunn. "The brokers who played the prank were not publicly admonished or disciplined for disrespecting a visiting dignitary."*

*Shortly after attending a public dinner in 1871, Dunn became violently ill. He died two days later. The official cause of death was "congestion to the brain and lungs," or natural causes. Several doctors examined his body, with some saying his death appeared to have been the result of arsenic poisoning.*

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## **SOCIALLY YOURS**

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### **WEDDING BELLS**

**Starla Gautreau** and Grand Isle Mayor **David Carmadelle** are celebrating one year together this month...

### **HAPPY BIRTHDAY, TRACKERS!**

- Tuesday, March 28: Former Sen. **Eric LaFleur**, **Ted Verrill**, **Vanessa Waguespack Anseman**, **Dawn Chanet Collins** and **Rhaoul Guillaume**
- Wednesday, March 29: **Meredith Nolan Landry**, **Nicole Davis DesOrmeaux** and **Tres Bernhard**
- Thursday, March 30: Sen. **Greg Tarver**, former Monroe Mayor **Jamie Mayo** and former Congressman **Buddy Leach**
- Friday, March 31: **Chris Tyson**, **Jerry Arbour** and **Beau Fourrier**



- Saturday, April 1: Sen. **Robert Mills**, late Rep. **Steve Pugh**, former Rep. **Tim Burns** and **Scott Franklin**
- Sunday, April 2: **Beau Tidwell**, **Nick Speyrer** and **Maggie Heyn Richardson**
- Monday, April 3: Former Sen. **Rick Gallot**, **Paul Sawyer**, **Lee Zurik**, **John Carpenter**, **Joey Durel** and **Lori Melancon**
- Have an upcoming birthday or a date I need to know about? Drop a line to [JJA@LaPolitics.com](mailto:JJA@LaPolitics.com).

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**THE END.**