



United Way of
Southeast Louisiana

2018 PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP

UNITED FOR A SAFE & PROSPEROUS COMMUNITY

KIM SPORT, Public Policy Chairman

United Way of Southeast Louisiana's 2018 Public Policy Legislative Agenda, **United for a Safe & Prosperous Community**, will continue our advocacy for all issues which complement our **Blueprint for Prosperity and its** mission to eradicate poverty. UWSELA will also continue to work closely with individuals, organizations, and coalitions that bring years of their passion and expertise to the table.

We experienced a busy policy year in the Louisiana State Legislature. In addition to the regular session, Governor John Bel Edwards called three special sessions to address state finances. UWSELA President and CEO Michael Williamson, Executive Vice President and COO Charmaine Caccioppi, and I participated in the Governor's A Good Deal for Louisiana Rally, which consisted of press interviews and speaking opportunities at the Capitol to call for bipartisanship to solving our state's financial challenges. We presented the struggles of **ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed)** households in Louisiana, which account for almost half of all families and individuals in the state.

We are grateful for the Louisiana representatives and senators who stood up as our **Legislative Champions in the areas of** education, financial stability, and health including: representatives Beryl Amedee, Larry Bagley, Joseph Bouie, Thomas Carmody, Gary Carter, Steve Carter, Stephanie Hilferty, Katrina Jackson, Patrick Jefferson, Edmond Jordan, Sherman Mack, Joseph Marino, Patricia Smith, Julie Stokes, Kirk Talbot, Polly Thomas, and Malinda White; and senators Regina Barrow, Wesley Bishop, Troy Carter, Ryan Gatti, Ronnie Johns, Danny Martiny, JP Morrell, and Rick Ward.

Thank you to our UWSELA Board of Trustees, Public Policy Committee, Women United members, staff, volunteers, and collaborative partners who advocated on our behalf throughout 2018.

Information on all legislative bills can be accessed online through the Louisiana State Legislature's website at: <https://www.legis.la.gov/legis/BillSearch.aspx?sid=last>

EDUCATION

UWSELA Women United and United Ways across Louisiana joined forces with the Ready Louisiana Coalition for **Early Education Day at the Capitol** to support investments in Louisiana's young children. Ready Louisiana is a coalition of business, education, advocacy, parent, and community organizations seeking adequate funding for quality, affordable early child care and education in Louisiana.

HCR 16 authored by Rep. Walt Leger -

SPECIAL DAY/WEEK/MONTH: Recognizes March 26, 2018, as United Way Women United Day at the state capitol and commends Women United for its dedication to the advancement of early childhood care and education.



ACT 639 (HB 676) authored by Rep. Stephanie Hilferty - EARLY CHILDHOOD: Creates the Early Childhood Care and

Education Commission and pilot programs for community early childhood care and education networks.

FINANCIAL STABILITY

UWSELA worked in partnership with United Ways across Louisiana to give an identity and voice to people who work hard, yet struggle to make ends meet—people recognized as **ALICE**. **ALICE** lives in all 64 parishes statewide and doesn't earn enough to make ends meet.

Governor John Bel Edwards invited Charmaine Caccioppi to appear in LPB's "Louisiana: The State We're In" for a special session discussion on the state of the budget, its impact on the communities UWSELA serves, the Earned Income Tax Credit, and the need for state lawmakers to work together to solve the fiscal cliff. [Click here](#) to view the full LPB recording.



ACT 6 (HB 18) authored by Rep. Katrina Jackson - Provides relative to the individual income tax credit for taxes paid to other states. Report adopts Senate amendments to increase the amount of the Earned Income Tax Credit from 3.5 to 5 percent of the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit amount.

SB 365 authored by Sen. Rick Ward was successfully defeated. This bill proposed the creation of the Louisiana Credit Access Loan Act with interest rates in excess of 160 percent and would have included an expansion of predatory lending.

HEALTH

After successfully battling breast cancer, Rep. Julie Stokes wanted to make the fight easier for other Louisianians. She was victorious in the passage of several health bills that require insurers to cover breast cancer screenings after a woman has a bilateral mastectomy and digital breast tomosynthesis, a procedure that creates a 3D image of a breast.

UWSELA's partner agency, CAGNO, was selected by the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners to re-write the new Louisiana Breast Cancer Treatment Alternatives brochure, which must be given to every woman diagnosed with breast cancer before treatment can begin and before consent is obtained to perform breast cancer surgery.

ACT 461 (HB 690) authored by Rep. Julie Stokes - INSURANCE/HEALTH: Provides for coverage for subsequent preventive tests for certain individuals diagnosed with breast cancer.

ACT 494 (HB 460) authored by Rep. Julie Stokes - INSURANCE/HEALTH: Provides that mammography examinations shall be conducted through digital tomosynthesis.



ACT 497 (HB 818) authored by Rep. Stephanie Hilferty - PUBLIC HEALTH: Creates the Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies Advisory Council.

ACT 580 (SB 556) authored by Sen. Troy Carter - HEALTHCARE: Provides relative to information and access to breast reconstructive surgery.

ACT 593 (HB 753 - formerly HB 584) authored by Rep. Julie Stokes - LICENSING: Provides for licensure of genetic counselors.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

UWSELA's Public Policy Committee continued to lead domestic violence reform efforts. In 2014, UWSELA formed the United Against Domestic Violence Coalition with the New Orleans Family Justice Center and the Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Many of the new laws, which were years in the making, are some of the strongest laws in place in the nation to protect victims of domestic and family violence. We are hopeful that these new laws will decrease Louisiana's homicide rates and protect victims, especially children, from the devastating effects of domestic violence. During 2017-18, the United Against Domestic Violence Coalition provided more than 10 "Five Awake" screenings and panel discussions throughout Louisiana and the U.S.



Summary of new 2018 domestic violence laws:

- Protective orders (POs) issued after a stalking conviction must contain a firearm prohibition
- POs issued to prohibit communication with a domestic violence victim during prosecution of certain felonies must contain a firearm prohibition
- Requires disclosure of firearms possessed by persons subject to domestic violence protective orders and following domestic violence convictions and further requires court orders to transfer firearms to sheriffs
- A firearm dealer must inform sheriffs of NICS background check failures
- A fraudulent attempt to purchase a firearm carries a penalty of up to 20 years imprisonment
- Unlawful possession of a firearm following a domestic violence conviction has an increased penalty of 1-20 years (formerly up to 5 years)
- The transfer of a firearm to a prohibited possessor is now prohibited – imprisonment up to 1 year

Kim Sport served as a panelist for Nola4Women's three-part series, Hear Our Voices - Mapping Change in our Community, which highlighted the policy advancements made by United Way, including domestic violence and health, and the challenges that remain ahead.

ACT 228 (SB 60) authored by Sen. Danny Martiny - DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: Provides relative to civil actions for domestic abuse.

ACT 263 (HB 79) authored by Rep. Sherman Mack - CRIME: Creates the crime of abuse of persons with infirmities through electronic means and provides for criminal penalties and exceptions.

ACT 264 (HB 100) authored by Rep. Malinda White - DOMESTIC ABUSE: Provides with respect to attorney fees and costs in domestic abuse cases.

ACT 265 (HB 125) authored by Rep. Patrick Jefferson - DIVORCE: Provides relative to divorce and spousal support.

ACT 282 (HB 776) authored by Rep. Patricia Smith - CRIME: Prohibits the possession of firearms in certain cases involving stalking.

ACT 293 (HB 896) authored by Rep. Patricia Smith - DOMESTIC ABUSE: Provides relative to battery of a dating partner, domestic abuse, and uniform abuse prevention orders.

ACT 309 (HB 307) authored by Rep. Polly Thomas - CRIMINAL/VICTIMS: Provides for the rights of certain crime victims.

ACT 367 (SB 231) authored by Sen JP Morrell - WEAPONS: Provides relative to firearm relinquishment for the

violation of a protective order.

ACT 383 (SB 366) authored by Sen. Rick Ward - CHILDREN: Provides relative to visitation rights of grandparents and siblings.

ACT 412 (SB 291) authored by Sen. Regina Barrow - FAMILY LAW: Provides relative to family violence and domestic abuse as factors to consider in determining visitation and custody.

ACT 630 (HB 612) authored by Rep. Julie Stokes - CRIME: Provides relative to the observation or filming of a person and the disclosure of certain images of a person.

ACT 679 (HB 207) authored by Rep. Larry Bagley - DOMESTIC ABUSE: Requires those who serve temporary protective orders or protective orders to transmit a service return to the Louisiana Protective Order Registry.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

ACT 458 (HB 488) authored by Rep. Beryl Amedee - CHILDREN/ABUSE: Provides to the mandatory reporting of certain crimes of sexual abuse of a minor.

COMMUNITY STRENGTHENING

UWSELA worked in strong collaborative partnership with advocates on important issues to assist our most vulnerable citizens, ensuring they have a chance of achieving economic stability.



- Louisiana Institute for Children in Families
- Louisiana Center for Children Rights
- The Pelican Institute
- LA-PRI
- Human Trafficking
- Medicaid Work Requirements
- Louisiana Justice Reinvestment Implementation
- Louisiana Foster – Louisiana’s Children – Our Children

JUSTICE REINVESTMENT

ACT 355 (SB107) authored by Sen. JP Morrell -CHILDREN’S CODE: Provides relative to the duration of a disposition on a felony-grade adjudication.

ACT 453 (HB 187) authored by Rep. Joseph Marino - JUVENILES: Provides relative to the use of restraints on juveniles during court proceedings.

ACT 467 (SB 102) authored by Sen. JP Morrell - CHILDREN’S CODE: Provides relative to disposition of children after adjudication of certain felony-grade delinquents acts.

ACT 654 (SB 248) authored by Sen. Ronnie Johns - CHILDREN’S CODE: Revises definition of “children” in the Children’s Code.



HUMAN TRAFFICKING

ACT 703 (HB 830) *authored by Rep. Julie Stokes* - HUMAN TRAFFICKING: Requires age and work status verification prior to work in a sexually oriented business to prevent human trafficking.

FOSTER CARE

ACT 237 (SB 211) *authored by Sen. Ryan Gatti* - CHILDREN: Provides relative to parental drug testing before allowing a foster child to return to the home.

ACT 649 (SB 129) *authored by Sen. Ryan Gatti* - FAMILY LAW: Provides relative to foster care children in high school.

SCR 10 *authored by Sen. Regina Ashford Barrow* - CHILDREN: Requests the Department of Children and Family Services to study extending the age of foster care to age twenty-one.

ELDER ABUSE

ACT 596 (HB 281) *authored by Rep. Kirk Talbot* - NURSING HOMES: Authorizes nursing home residents or their qualified surrogates to have monitoring devices installed in those residents' rooms.

IN THE NEWS... (click to read)

[A simple request to lawmakers: 'Do what is right for Louisiana families' | Letter – June 8, 2018](#)

[Letters: Bill Would Help Poor Families – May 30, 2018](#)

[Abusers finally will have to give up their guns | Editorial – May 18, 2018](#)

[Stephanie Grace: Helena Moreno's fight for domestic violence legislation a master class in effective advocacy – May 3, 2018](#)

[Senate passes bill that would help keep guns from domestic abusers named in restraining orders – April 4, 2018](#)

[Louisiana Shouldn't Let Abusers Get Away With Keeping Guns | Editorial – January 31, 2018](#)

[Words Could Take Guns From Louisiana's Domestic Violence Offenders – January 30, 2018](#)

[St. Bernard Sheriff speaks at United Way Domestic Violence Awareness panel discussion - October 2017](#)