

2023 LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP

United Way SELA
Public Policy Committee



UWSELA Public Policy Committee



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United for a Safe & Prosperous Community

The United Way of Southeast Louisiana Public Policy 2023 State Legislative Agenda, United for a Safe and Prosperous Community, continues to advance our fight to eradicate poverty in Southeast Louisiana through the <u>Blueprint for Prosperity</u> and support ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) households. ALICE represents the growing number of hardworking individuals and families across our state who are employed but unable to afford the basic household necessities (including housing, child care, health care, food, and transportation) that undergird economic stability. According to the United Way ALICE Report, over half of our state's households live in poverty or struggle to make ends meet, a reality whose implications have become more apparent following the coronavirus pandemic and recent major weather events.

UWSELA Public Policy team coordinated with our Community Impact experts to ensure we included issues resonating in our community and affecting ALICE families in this agenda. Our agenda was also informed by the needs highlighted by residents in each of the seven parishes we serve (Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, and Washington) in our Community Conversations series and is responsive to the challenges most pressing to our communities.

UWSELA Public Policy Committee met before the start of the session to prepare our 2023 State Legislative Agenda. This year we held four Educational Sessions to help engage our collaborative partners and funders, which included subject matter experts who shared their knowledge to assist us in creating a robust agenda. Mary Ambrose, UWSELA Chief Equity & Impact Officer, kicked off each educational session with the following DEI question:

"So often policies are created without community input, causing harm, especially to the same communities they are intended to help. How are you ensuring you are putting people first – focusing on real people's problems and experiences to uncover and address systemic inequities?"



Ron McClain Public Policy Chairman

2023 EXTRAORDINARY SESSION

The Louisiana Legislature held its first Extraordinary Session this year to address Insurance Commissioner Jim Donelon's request to allocate \$45 million to a newly-created incentive fund to attract insurance firms to Louisiana. The Legislature passed ACT 1 (formerly HB 1) by Rep. Jerome Zeringue, which appropriated \$45 million to the Insure Louisiana Incentive Program to incentivize insurance companies to write policies in Louisiana. ACT 2 (formerly HB 2) by Rep. John Stefanski was also passed, which restricts the use of funding for the Insure Louisiana Incentive Program. Under HB2, no insurance provider that filed for bankruptcy or was declared insolvent will be eligible for financial incentives.

2023 REGULAR LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The 2023 Regular Legislative Session convened on April 10 and adjourned at approximately 6:00 p.m. on June 8. This year's Louisiana Legislature had record revenue available to address Louisiana's many needs.

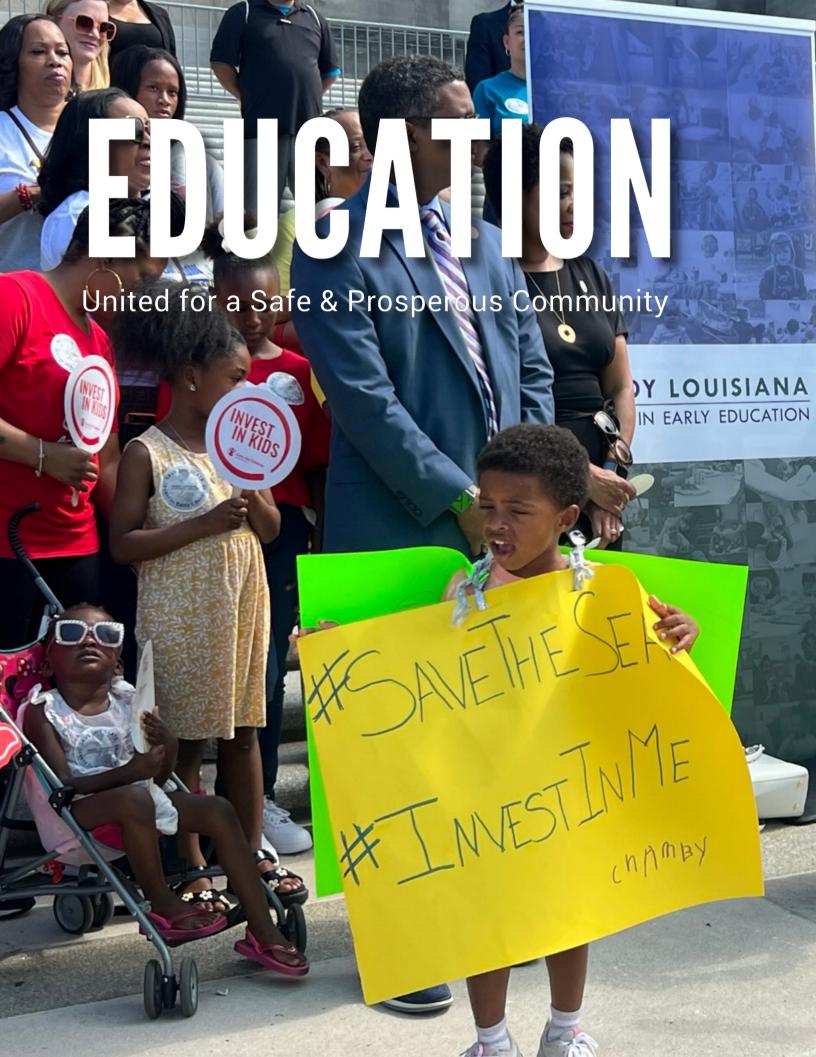
Odd years are limited fiscal sessions. Legislators could file unlimited fiscal bills, unlimited local bills, and only five general bills. Instruments filed included: 894 bills (661 House bills and 233 Senate bills), 29 constitutional amendments, and 723 resolutions and study requests.

Total Fiscal Year 23-24 Appropriations equaled \$50.9B. The Balanced State Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 included the General Appropriation Bill (HB 1), which contained \$43.7B for the ordinary operating expenditures of the executive branch for FY23, an \$113.6M increase over FY22.

SCR 3 increased the expenditure limit for FY23 by \$250M and FY24 by \$1.4B allowing the Legislature to appropriate additional state revenue recognized by the Revenue Estimating Conference (REC).

2023 VETO SESSION

Gov. John Bel Edwards vetoed 25 2023 Regular Legislative Session bills, including the <u>state budget</u> and LGBTQ+ identity. Gov. Edwards' veto of a ban on gender-affirming medical care for trans youth triggered a veto-override session in July. The five-day special session of the Louisiana Legislature ended after one day, in a score of Gov. Edwards 24, Legislature 1.



The 2023 Legislative Session was a success.

Your support made it possible for United Way of Southeast Louisiana, the Ready Louisiana Coalition, and our collaborative partners to advocate for funding and policies that support young children and their families.

This year, we are walking away with almost \$52 million in new funding for young children in HB 1, the largest state investment of state dollars into the Child Care Assistance Program in over a decade. When session ended, there was \$44 million in the budget, but thanks to a line item veto by Governor Edwards, we now have almost \$52 million total going into early care and education (ECE). As a result of our tireless, collaborative efforts, approximately 4,000 children across the state will keep their publicly-funded ECE seats.

In addition to increased ECE investment, the Legislature passed three critical pieces of legislation that support children and their families:

- Representative Barbara Freiberg's HB 338 modifies the duties of the Early Childhood Care and Education Commission and requires them to look at a formula to fund ECE.
- Representative Ken Brass' resolution HCR 43 urges and requests the Department of Education to update its ECE data management systems as soon as possible.
- Senator Sharon Hewitt's bill SB 201 requires the use
 of technology when conducting public meetings to
 facilitate participation for those who find it difficult
 to attend in person but whose experiences would
 improve the process. This will allow parents of
 young children to participate in the public meeting
 process regardless of access to childcare.

We are proud to have advocated for these wins, which are excellent steps in the right direction toward ensuring Louisiana children are prepared for success, parents are supported, and employers have a reliable workforce.



Ready Louisiana hosted the Early Education Day 2023 at the Capitol in the Governor's Press Room, followed by a successful luncheon at Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser's apartment in the Pentagon Barracks. UWSELA, LPIC, and the entire Ready LA coalition educated policymakers about the importance of improving policies and increasing investment for quality early care and education for children birth through age four in Louisiana.



The Louisiana Policy Institute for Children (LPIC), in partnership with UWSELA, held a press conference at the Louisiana State Capitol to release a report, funded with support from Entergy Corporation, "A Modern History of Early Care and Education in Louisiana," which analyzed the modern history of early care and education (ECE) in legislation and funding from the turn of the 21st century through 2022, including lessons learned.



Ready Louisiana held a press conference on the steps of the Capitol to implore legislators to save the state from devastating cuts to early education funding. Michael Williamson, UWSELA President and CEO, delivered a message on the importance of investing in ECE,

OTHER EDUCATION LEGISLATION

UWSELA advocated for governmental action in the wide range of supports necessary for young people to pursue meaningful and fulfilling futures, including early childhood, K-12 educational policies, and higher education, protecting the rights and well-being of students, and investment in educational professionals to enhance student achievement and well-being.

ACT 422 (HB 12) by Rep. Richard Nelson

STUDENTS: Prohibits promotion to the fourth grade of certain students whose reading deficiencies have not been remedied by the end of the third grade.

ACT 266 (HB 69) by Rep. Joseph Marino

STUDENTS: Provides for the screening and diagnosis of students with respect to dyslexia.

ACT 53 (HB 72) by Rep. Ken Brass

COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES: Provides relative to the designation of military and veteran-friendly campuses.

ACT 267 (HB 103) by Rep. Nicholas Muscarello CURRICULA: Adds Financial Literacy as a required course for high school students.

ACT 224 (HB 167) by Rep. Kenny Cox

STUDENT/TUITION: Provides for a tuition waiver for certain disabled veterans.

ACT 63 (HB 191) by Rep. Patrick Jefferson

TEACHERS/CERTIFICATION: Provides relative to teacher certification.

ACT 268 (HB 242) by Rep. Stephanie Hilferty

STUDENT/DISCIPLINE: Provides relative to corporal punishment in elementary and secondary schools.

ACT 305 (HB 282) by Rep. Kyle Green

SCHOOLS/FOOD PROGRAMS: Requires free school breakfast and lunch for certain students

ACT 83 (HB 338) by Rep. Barbara Freiberg

EARLY CHILDHOOD: Provides relative to the Early Childhood Care and Education Commission.

ACT 181 (HB 412) by Rep. Malinda White

EARLY CHILDHOOD: Establishes a program to be administered by the La. Educational Television Authority for the purpose of encouraging reading for young children and creates a fund within the state treasury for the purpose of funding the program.

ACT 128 (HB 644 formerly HB 381) by Rep. Vanessa LaFleur

TEXTBOOKS/MATERIALS: Creates the Affordable Digital Textbook and Learning Materials Subscription Pilot Program.

HCR 5 by Rep. Michael Echols

HIGHER EDUCATION: Requests that the Board of Regents conduct a study relative to the state's articulation and transfer process with respect to career and technical education courses.

HCR 17 by Rep. Buddy Mincey

TEACHERS: Continues the Teacher Recruitment, Recovery, and Retention Task Force.

HCR 43 by Rep. Ken Brass

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT: Requests the Louisiana Department of Education to update its early childhood care and education data management systems.

ACT 287 (SB 204) by Sen. Sharon Hewitt

POSTSECONDARY ED: Provides relative to the M.J. Foster Promise Award program.

ACT 334 (SB 207) by Sen. Barry Milligan

SCHOOLS: Creates the School Safety Act of 2023.

SCR 2 by Sen. Cleo Fields

BESE: Provides for legislative approval of the MFP formula for the 2023-2024 school year.









UWSELA Testimony at Louisiana State Capitol (I to r) Jamene Dahmer, Chiquita Lattimore, and Michael Williamson.

UWSELA encouraged increased governmental support for evidence-based programs and policies that undergird economic stability and financial empowerment for all, including workforce development, pay transparency, emergency assistance, and the establishment of a living wage. We monitored legislation that would hinder positions we have taken in the past that may further negatively impact our ALICE community.

HB 162 by Rep. Matthew Willard (Failed)

TAX CREDITS: Increases the amount of the earned income tax credit.

HB 283 by Rep. Vanessa LaFleur (Failed)

LABOR: Provides relative to employment practices related to wage history, wage disclosure, and retaliation.

HB 374 by Rep. Ed Larvadain (Failed)

EMPLOYMENT/WAGES-MINIMUM: Establishes a state minimum wage rate.

HR 3 by Rep. Matthew Willard

SPECIAL DAY/WEEK/MONTH: Designates April 25, 2023, as Step Up Louisiana Day at the state capitol.

SB 93 by Sen. Joseph Bouie (Failed)

EMPLOYMENT: Requires that any contractor who enters into a contract with a public entity comply with the Louisiana Equal Pay for Women Act. (8/1/23)

SB 148 by Sen. Gary Carter (Failed)

EMPLOYMENT: Provides relative to employment practices related to wage history, wage disclosure, and retaliation.

SB 149 by Sen. Gary Carter (Failed)

EMPLOYMENT: Provides relative to the state minimum wage.



UWSELA inspired governmental action to ensure that all Louisianans have access to equitable health services that protect and improve mental and physical well-being,

including trauma-informed care, mental health services, paid family leave, Medicaid, maternal child health, services for sexual assault survivors, and human trafficking prevention.

UWSELA committed investment in the <u>Whole Health Louisiana</u> (WHL) initiative, a multi-sector, statewide effort from First Lady Donna Edwards' office to prevent childhood adversity and trauma and address the short- and long-term impacts of adversity and trauma on children, families, and communities. Louisiana ranks in the top 10 of the worst states with the highest per capita number of children (birth to 17 years) who have experienced two or more Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): 18.6% in Louisiana compared to the 14.0% U.S. average (<u>National Survey of Children's Health</u>, 2020-21). Public Policy Chair, Ron McClain is appointed as UWSELA's member on the WHL Steering Committee.

ACT 133 (HB 21) by Rep. Joe Stagni

SCHOOLS/EMPLOYEES: Provides relative to extended leave for school bus operators and public school employees.

ACT 17 (HB 200) by Rep. Vanessa LaFleur

CHILDREN/NEWBORNS: Provides relative to newborn screening for certain genetic conditions.

(EN SEE FISC NOTE GF EX See Note)

ACT 270 (HB 272) by Rep. Matthew Willard

INSURANCE/HEALTH: Provides relative to maternity support services of doulas.

HCR 16 by Rep. Barbara Carpenter

SPECIAL DAY/WEEK/MONTH: Recognizes April 11-17, 2023, as Black Maternal Health Week in the state.

HR 4 by Rep. Candace Newell

SPECIAL DAY/WEEK/MONTH: Recognizes the week of April 11 through 17, 2023, as Black Maternal Health Week.

ACT 234 (SB 12) by Sen. Cleo Fields

PUBLIC HEALTH: Requires an automated external defibrillator on the premises of all educational institutions and at sponsored athletic events.

HR 4 by Rep. Candace Newell (Sent to the Secretary of State)

SPECIAL DAY/WEEK/MONTH: Recognizes the week of April 11 through 17, 2023, as Black Maternal Health Week.

ACT 234 (SB 12) by Sen. Cleo Fields

PUBLIC HEALTH: Requires an automated external defibrillator on the premises of all educational institutions and at sponsored athletic events.

ACT 437 (SB 41) by Sen. Beth Mizell (Sent to Governor)

TAX/TAXATION: Establishes a tax credit for certain maternal wellness centers. (1/1/24)



First Lady of Louisiana Donna Edwards United Way of Southeast Louisiana's Public Policy Award Recipient

ACT 322 (SB 66) by Sen. Fred Mills

HEALTH CARE: Provides relative to telehealth services. (1/1/24)

ACT 207 (SB 135) by Sen. Regina Barrow

MEDICAID: Provides relative to Medicaid reimbursement for services provided by a licensed midwife. (8/1/23)

ACT 325 (SB 137) by Sen. Regina Barrow

CHILDREN: Creates the Office of Child Advocacy and the state child advocate. (8/1/23)

ACT 210 (SB 200) by Sen. Royce Duplessis

EMPLOYMENT: Provides that retaliation against an employee for an absence from work due to genetic testing or a medically necessary cancer screening shall be an unlawful employment practice. (8/1/23)

SR 19 by Sen. Royce Duplessis (Sent to the Secretary of State)

LEGIS POWERS/FUNCTIONS: Designates the week of April 11-17, 2023, as Black Maternal Health Week.



UWSELA championed policies to increase equity and eliminate barriers to opportunity

for vulnerable individuals and families, including access to affordable housing, protection from insurance exploitation, and prevention of discriminatory and exclusionary practices.

ACT 403 (HB 247) by Rep. Mandie Landry

TAX/INCOME-INDIV/CREDIT: Establishes a tax credit for purchases of firearm safety devices.

ACT 164 (HB 348) by Rep. Samuel Jenkins

SCHOOLS: Provides relative to school safety.

ACT 277 (HB 449) by Rep. Matthew Willard

VOTERS/VOTING: Provides relative to the rights of voters with disabilities.

ACT 314 (HB 506) by Rep. Daryl Adams

HOUSING: Creates the Louisiana Interagency Council on Homelessness within the office of the governor.

HR 7 by Rep. Denise Marcelle

PUBLIC SFTY/CORRECTIONS: Directs the Department of Public Safety and Corrections to permit incarcerated parents to virtually attend certain ceremonies involving their children.

ACT 116 (SB 111) by Sen. Royce Duplessis

CRIMINAL RECORDS: Provides relative to the expungement of criminal records. (8/1/23)

ACT 328 (SB 156) by Sen. Royce Duplessis

INSURANCE POLICIES: Provides that no property insurance policy shall prohibit an insured from hiring a public adjuster.

ACT 210 (SB 200) by Sen. Royce Duplessis

EMPLOYMENT: Provides that retaliation against an employee for an absence from work due to genetic testing or a medically necessary cancer screening shall be an unlawful employment practice. (8/1/23)

ACT 211 (SB 202) by Sen. Regina Barrow

COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES: Provides relative to campus accountability and safety.

ACT 247 (SB 213) by Sen. Royce Duplessis

PUBLIC RECORDS: Provides relative to the costs for public records. (8/1/23)

SCR 7 by Sen. Kirk Talbot

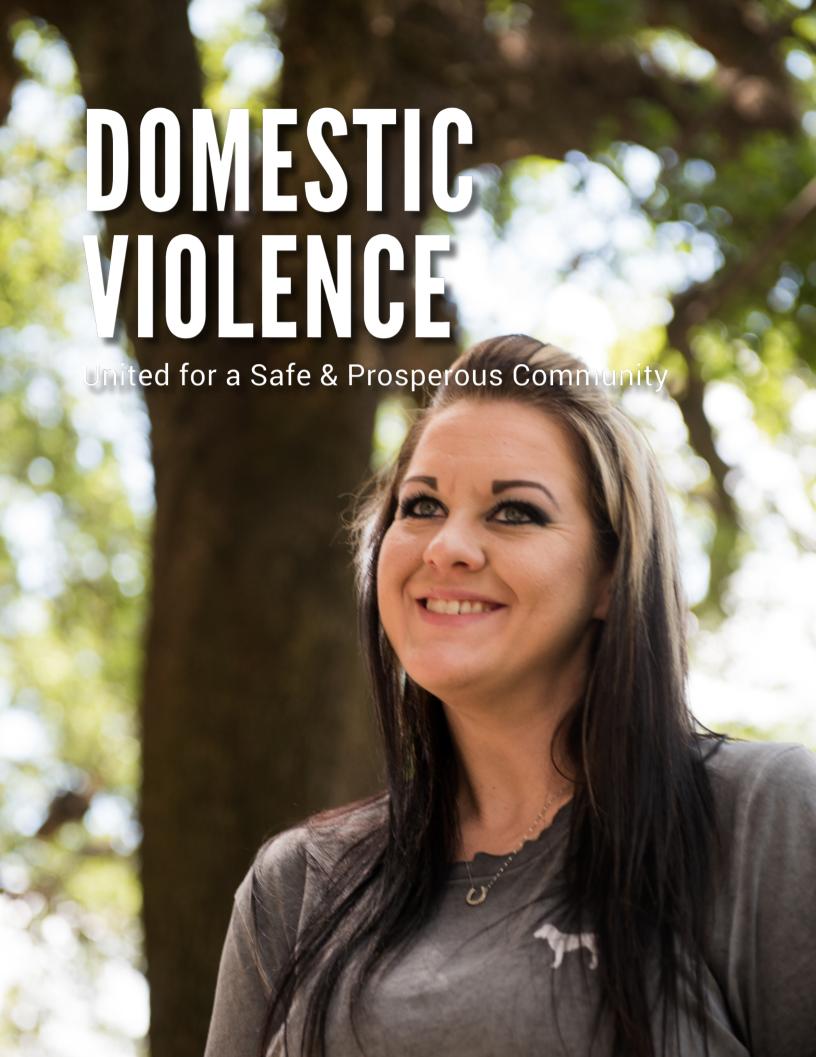
PROPERTY INSURANCE: Urges the commissioner of insurance to create the Hurricane Mitigation Commission to study and report findings and recommendations relative to the handling of property insurance claims in the wake of hurricanes and the necessity of a catastrophe savings account.

SR 151 by Sen. Royce Duplessis

WEAPONS: Requests Louisiana State Police, LDH's office of behavioral health, and the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement to collaborate on best practices and model programs that address gun violence prevention and intervention.

SR 170 by Sen. Royce Duplessis

CRIME/PUNISHMENT: Creates a task force to study and make recommendations regarding crime against nature by solicitation.





UWSELA promoted and campaigned for policies and procedures that protect and support survivors of domestic violence, including increased access to shelter and emergency services, increased protections for survivors, domestic violence training for system actors, intervention programs for perpetrators, and awareness-building efforts. The Louisiana Senate leadership included an additional \$7 million for domestic violence shelters and victims' services in its state budget proposal.

ACT 229 (HB 217) by Rep. Vanessa LaFleur

COURTS: Provides relative to commissioners of the Nineteenth Judicial District Court. (OR +\$456,800 LF EX See Note)

ACT 309 (HB 376) by Rep. Delisha Boyd

DOMESTIC ABUSE: Provides relative to protective orders.

ACT 386 (SB 31) by Sen. Beth Mizell

CRIMINAL JUSTICE: Creates database to track trafficking arrests, convictions, restitution, fines, and civil asset forfeiture. (8/1/23) (OR NO IMPACT See Note)

ACT 193 (SB 169) by Sen. Beth Mizell

EVIDENCE: Provides for tracking rape kits from collection through conviction. (8/1/23)

SR 4 by Sen. Beth Mizell

CRIME/PUNISHMENT: Recreates the Task Force on Human Trafficking Arrests.

SR 5 by Sen. Franklin Foil

CRIMINAL PROCEDURE: Creates the Protective Order Procedure and Records Task Force.



UWSELA supported the development of policies that provide comprehensive, holistic supports to young people to ensure they can pursue stable, healthy, meaningful futures, including providing high-quality extracurricular, cultural, and recreational services, leadership support programming, and safe neighborhoods for youth.

ACT 55 (HB 78) by Rep. Jason Hughes

SCHOOLS: Provides relative to school facilities preservation and system-wide needs programs in certain school districts.

ACT 305 (HB 282) by Rep. Kyle Green

SCHOOLS/FOOD PROGRAMS: Requires free school breakfast and lunch for certain students.

ACT 271 (HB 298) by Rep. Jason Hughes

CHILDREN/PARENTAL RIGHTS: Provides relative to parental rights in certain circumstances.

ACT 79 (HB 316) by Rep. Tammy Phelps

VOTING/REGISTRATION: Provides for Louisiana High School Seniors Voter Registration Day.

ACT 318 (HB 353) by Rep. Denise Marcelle

STUDENTS: Provides relative to student behavior, discipline, and behavioral and mental health.

ACT 93 (HB 561) by Rep. Clay Schexnayder

AGRICULTURE: Provides relative to the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center.

ACT 325 (SB 137) by Sen. Regina Barrow

CHILDREN: Creates the Office of the State Child Ombudsman and the state child ombudsman. (8/1/23)

ACT 208 (SB 150) by Sen. Robert Mills

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT: Creates the Louisiana Literacy Advisory Commission.

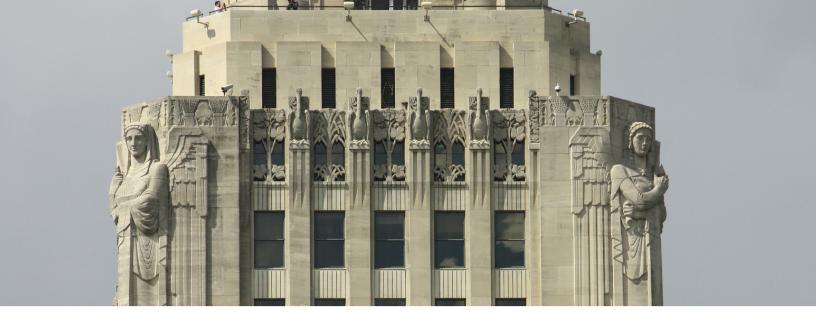
ACT 334 (SB 207) by Sen. Barry Milligan

SCHOOLS: Creates the School Safety Act of 2023.



RESEARCH

United for a Safe & Prosperous Community



The following reports include research of all issues the Public Policy Committee advocated for in the 2023 Legislative Session:

ALICE in Louisiana: A Financial Hardship Study

https://www.unitedwaysela.org/alice-report

A Modern History of Early Care & Education in Louisiana, A Movement Still Underway

https://policyinstitutela.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/A-Modern-History-of-Early-Care-and-Education-in-Louisiana-2001-2022-A-Movement-Still-Underway-2.pdf

Ellevate Louisiana - Pending Final Approval of Legislative Priorities

https://growthzonesitesprod.azureedge.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/1712/2023/05/2023-Policy-Positions-Website-1.pdf

Louisiana Partnership for Children and Families

- Geaux Far Louisiana Strategic Plan 2023-2028 Overview https://static1.squarespace.com/static/624f4a58f8c4ee7e640c8d03/t/6369c42b9055480b6c81
 2034/1667875886527/GFL_Executive_10_24_Final.pdf
- Geaux Far Additional Fact Sheet:

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/624f4a58f8c4ee7e640c8d03/t/6369c42b9055480b6c81 2034/1667875886527/GFL_Executive_10_24_Final.pdf

Louisiana Budget Project

- Medicaid works. Let's keep it strong
 https://www.labudget.org/2023/04/medicaid-works-lets-keep-it-strong/
- LBP Statement on Governor's Executive Budget
 <u>https://www.labudget.org/2023/02/lbp-statement-on-governors-executive-budget/</u>
- LBP Paid Family Medical Leave
 https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:49ea1725-b5d4-3931-9a19-0063bbb011a3



Louisiana Policy & Research Commission 2022 Annual Report

https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:8d4b30f5-e080-34c4-adb5-235ac5b3ebf4

Louisiana Public Health Institute (LPHI)

https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:c9c6a7b2-84ee-3732-8448-23b9daafd00b

Whole Health Louisiana

https://ldh.la.gov/assets/oph/Center-

PHCH/FamilyHealth/WholeHealthLouisiana_November2022Convening_Summary.pdf

Addressing Gun Violence in America

2023 UWSELA Tulane Intern Reports

- Domestic Violence Policy in Louisiana: A Matter of Life or Death by Lila Brown, Tulane Intern https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:4e888a1d-5510-374d-b5fe-7edc6b714219
- Expanding UWSELA Prosperity Centers by Adina Weizman, Tulane Intern
 https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:a9d193bb-6257-3bf1-9c76-3e684e00441d
- Expanding Funding for UWSELA Prosperity Centers by Adina Weizman, Tulane Intern
 https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:b4ae7617-fa45-39c3-a369-7b7dbac34cb4
- Louisiana Investment for Tomorrow by Margo Kern, Tulane Intern
 https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:8363346f-c211-3895-8e24-8b58c688b7e8



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SIGN UP FOR ACTION ALERTS

UnitedWaySELA.org/Advocate



United Way of Southeast Louisiana

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