

2007 Gubernatorial Candidate Survey

A voter information initiative of
The Council for A Better Louisiana
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Candidate Profile

Candidate Name: Bobby Jindal

Campaign Address: 16560 Old Perkins Road, Baton Rouge, La 70810

Campaign Phone: 225-756-7969

Campaign E-mail: info@bobbyjindal.com

Hometown: Baton Rouge

Party Affiliation: Republican

Current Job: United States Congressman

Professional Experience:

Member of the United States Congress, representing the 1st District of Louisiana

Appointed by President George W. Bush as Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

President of the University of Louisiana System

Executive Director, National Bipartisan Commission on the Future of Medicare (Breaux-Thomas Commission)

Secretary, Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals

Advised CEOs/Senior Management of Fortune 50 companies as consultant for McKinsey & Company

Political Experience:

Elected to Congress in 2004

Senate Confirmed Political Appointee

Education:

1994 – Graduated from Oxford University with a graduate degree, Rhodes Scholar

1991 – Graduated from Brown University with honors, in biology and public policy, Phi Beta Kappa

1988 – Graduated from Baton Rouge High School

Professional and/or Community Affiliations (limit 5):

Note: When confirmed as Assistant Secretary for the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, I was required to resign most of my board appointments.

Former board member of Teach For America, Baton Rouge chapter

Former board member of Our Lady of the Lake Hospital

Member Board of Trustees Brown University
Former board member of National Conference for Community Justice, Baton Rouge chapter

Image, Campaign Conduct, and Leadership

1. What is one thing that distinguishes you from other candidates in the race?

I have the background and experience needed to undertake a detailed, comprehensive effort that will give Louisiana the fresh start it so desperately needs. The challenges facing our state require more than just catchy sound bites and, quite frankly, Louisiana voters expect and deserve more. My plan will rid corruption and incompetence from state government, help us fulfill our economic potential, improve education for our children, and reform our current two-tiered health care system. I have represented Louisiana in Congress, run our state health system and portions of our higher education system, worked in the private sector and served in the federal government. No other candidate can match this unique and varied experience.

2. Please list what you believe are the three most critical factors that are holding Louisiana back from moving forward at a more accelerated pace.

First, we must rid our government from corruption and incompetence by passing strong ethics laws that will make government more open and accountable to the people of Louisiana. Second, we must remove obstacles to economic development by eliminating harmful taxes that drive away business investment, guaranteeing a qualified workforce to meet market demand, controlling runaway state spending, making insurance more affordable, and improving our crumbling roads and infrastructure. Third, we must improve our education system by helping schools meet strong accountability standards, attract and retain quality educators, instill discipline in our classrooms, and inspire students to succeed within today's curriculum while preparing for tomorrow's opportunities.

3. People want to elect a candidate who can get the job done. That means a LEADER. What kind of leader are you? Listed below are several traits of effective leaders. All are good traits, but please indicate in ranked order the three qualities that best define your leadership style and will show voters the most important leadership qualities you will bring to the governor's office.

- a. **1 - Visionary – Looks beyond today's situation to the future's possibilities. Addresses short-term problems in the context of the big picture. Thinks about where we should be tomorrow, but also where we need to be five years from now.**
- b. ___ Innovative – Challenges and questions the status quo. Has the desire to try new things, and the ability to make them happen.
- c. ___ Willing to Take Risks – Not afraid to move out in front. Willing to take – and defend – unpopular positions when they are right. Searches for challenging opportunities. Bold enough to experiment and make real changes to improve conditions in Louisiana. Learns from accompanying mistakes.
- d. **3 - Listens and Brings People Together – Listens to citizens and legislators. Asks questions. Brings together diverse groups and helps them find common ground necessary to solve problems and move the state forward.**
- e. ___ Doesn't Micromanage – Surrounds him or herself with good people. Doesn't try to do everything alone. Provides direction but delegates authority, allowing others to perform their jobs while ensuring that they remain accountable.
- f. ___ Finishes the Job – Has the ability and resolve to "stay the course" even in the face of adverse circumstances. Doesn't give up easily. Keeps working for positive change despite the pressure of powerful entrenched interests who benefit from the status quo. Committed to producing measurable results.
- g. **2 - OTHER:**
 - **Honesty and Accountability. The people of Louisiana should know that my administration will be trustworthy, accountable and honest. I will ensure that**

every appointment in my administration will be held to a high standard of integrity and performance.

4. The person who is elected governor represents the state of Louisiana to the rest of the nation and the world. If you were to serve as governor in the next four years, please describe the image you think the rest of the nation would have of you and our state at the end of your term.

My goal is for Louisiana to remain in just as many (if not more) of the national headlines we see today, but for those future headlines to be trumpeting the remarkable transformation of our state. Rather than thinking about how I will be perceived, my only focus is for the nation to see Louisiana itself as a turnaround success story. The nation will see a state that aggressively tackled a reputation for corruption and government incompetence by passing strong ethics laws with real enforcement and true accountability to the people. The nation will see an economy that is booming due to a new tax system that welcomes investment, an improved community college and technical school system producing a coveted and skilled workforce, a higher education system that is a leader in research and development, and a transportation infrastructure that makes Louisiana a critical hub for commerce. Lastly, the nation will see that our children are finally getting the education they deserve through strong accountability, classroom discipline, and incentivizing teachers and giving them the tools to be successful.

5. List three outcomes you would use to measure your success in your 1st year as governor.

The people of Louisiana should expect to see the following three outcomes in my first year as governor:

1. *I will call a special session of the Legislature early next year to pass comprehensive ethics laws with strong enforcement that will make our state the standard-bearer for ethics, transparency and government accountability.*
2. *I will make our budget process more transparent and responsible so that we finally slow down the runaway spending we are seeing from our state government. We simply must be more responsible in how we spend the people's money.*
3. *I will ensure economic growth that will be highlighted by more high-wage jobs that are not only keeping our children in state to work and succeed, but also attracting people from other states to find prosperity here in Louisiana.*

Business/Job Growth

6. Louisiana is still losing many of its young people to other states because of a shortage of the high-quality jobs that attract them. Recognizing that the state has to support its traditional jobs and business sectors while at the same time expanding and diversifying our economy to create new opportunities, please list up to three primary strategies you would use to accomplish this. (limit to 150 words)

Since 1980, Louisiana has had the third lowest rate of population growth in the country. Our state loses on average 30,000 people per year. We simply must create the high-quality, high-wage jobs here in Louisiana that will not only keep our children in state, but also attract the best and brightest from other states to move here as well. We must first do away with harmful and unorthodox taxes that are driving business investment to other states so that businesses bring their jobs to Louisiana. We also must improve our education system from pre-K through high school so graduating seniors are prepared for training in our universities, community colleges or technical schools, and are armed with the skills needed to provide a qualified workforce. Additionally, we must improve the partnership between higher education and the private sector to invest in research and development, and waive the state's interest in royalty payments for patented industry research in exchange for increased economic activity in our state. A high-wage, growing economy can be ours if we simply focus on attracting investment and developing our students into the skilled workforce the markets of today demand.

7. Louisiana continues to have a serious problem with safety and maintenance of roads, congestion in high-growth areas, and other infrastructure needs. This is hampering local and regional efforts to

build on economic development success. Given Louisiana's current budget situation, which financing strategies would you consider using to address this growing problem (check any or all):

Shift more recurring revenues into the Transportation Trust Fund

Raise gasoline taxes

Assess new or higher transportation user fees

Assess tolls. If so, would it be for new, old, or specially designated routes? _____

Local and state public-private partnerships

Other methods: In addition to dedicating recurring transportation related taxes and fees to the transportation fund, we should move non-transportation related expenses out of the transportation fund, and better prioritize funding for transportation projects that stimulate economic growth.

8. Many other states have grown new types of jobs by supporting high-quality research and development, either through universities, private investments or partnerships in areas such as information technology, biomedical research, applied technology, etc. What do you see as Louisiana's strengths in these areas and in what ways, if any, do you think state government should support their growth?

A recent study by the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation (ITIF) shows that innovative capacity derived through universities, research and development investments, scientists and engineers, and entrepreneurial drive is the key to success in the new economy. That same study ranks Louisiana in the bottom five among states in information technology professionals, workforce education, number of scientists and engineers, venture capital attracted, and high tech jobs. Louisiana must focus investments in high caliber university research and specialized community and technical college programs to target regional industry sectors. For instance, while shipbuilding and arts/entertainment are some of the identified sectors in the New Orleans area, petrochemical and refining is a focus in Southwest Louisiana. Strong research departments such as chemical engineering at LSU, computer science at UL-Lafayette, and micro manufacturing at Louisiana Tech should be expanded to develop "innovation corridors" in each region of the state. Considering that nationwide, just under two-thirds of all research and development funding is provided by business and industry, we must also stimulate private sector investment by expanding the research and development tax credit for companies that partner with higher education for research and expand university technology transfer and commercialization programs. Additionally, we must better utilize assets such as the charity hospital system, the primate research center and Pennington Biomedical Research Center by better pursuing federal research dollars and stimulating private investment.

9. It is extremely difficult to grow an economy without an available, trained workforce, yet Louisiana faces a severe workforce crisis. If elected, how would you rate this as a priority and what specifically would you do to improve the situation?

Developing a highly skilled and well-trained workforce is absolutely critical to our economic success. We must guarantee to employers that Louisiana workers are prepared and, if not, offer to retrain them for free. Georgia has a similar guarantee program in place today. Studies show that about 65 percent of current and future jobs require more training than high school but less than a four-year college degree. Despite the fact that our community and technical college system has made great strides in recent years, we must put a greater emphasis on expanding this system. Improved partnership between community and technical schools with businesses will allow the curriculum to continuously evolve to meet identified shortage areas in the marketplace. We must also improve the effectiveness of the business and career solution centers in our state and submit monthly reports on their performance. We must also better prepare our high school students by expanding dual track and dual enrollment programs in our high schools so that students can get a head start on learning the skills needed to succeed in the market.

10. What would be your focus in the first year of your administration to hasten the recovery of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast?

We are all too aware of the challenges we still face two years after two of the most destructive hurricanes this country has ever seen hit Louisiana's shores. The myriad of challenges that face the impacted communities will require a continued focus for years to come. The first thing that I will pledge is that federal relief money will no longer be held up by bureaucratic roadblocks in the State Capitol. These dollars cannot rebuild a school, make a neighborhood safer, or improve health care for our citizens if they are being held up due to paperwork requirements. We must also stop the increase in crime we are seeing every night on the news before this ruthless element drives away the many hardworking residents that have returned to rebuild their lives. In addition, we must make insurance not just more affordable and attainable, but also ensure it works better in times of need so people can receive prompt assistance when they need it most. Additionally, we must attract new teachers and rebuild our school system so that the children impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita can prepare themselves to be the leaders of tomorrow in these communities.

11. Please list any other priority economic development strategies you would undertake to grow and diversify Louisiana's economy.

It will take a comprehensive plan and a commitment to executing it to make our economy grow and prosper. Louisiana needs better roads to improve our economy and quality of life. We must stop driving away small business, corporate investment and high paying jobs to neighboring states by finally putting in place a tax system that is fair to our people and the companies that want to hire them. We have to invest in higher education with a focus on research efforts that partner with the private sector to meet the needs of our state. We need an honest, ethical government structured to attract investment in our state as compared to one that puts bureaucracy and cronyism first. We have to stop runaway state spending in its tracks. We must develop a qualified workforce by utilizing our community and technical college system to train our workers with the skills business and industry need to succeed. We must protect the jobs we currently have and improve our ability to compete with other states to attract more high-paying jobs. We must better utilize our world-class port system and its connection to a concentration of waterways, railroads and roadways that should allow us to be the U.S. leader in international trade.

Higher Education

12. Six-year graduation rates at some of Louisiana's four-year universities are improving, but most remain significantly below rates in the south and the nation. The state has already raised some admission standards as one way to address this. What other strategies would you use to improve college graduation rates?

Before our high school students even enter college, we must better inform them about higher education options and college admission requirements so they are better prepared to succeed in college. Too many of our graduating seniors enter college unprepared and leave these programs saddled with student loans without the skills needed to get high-wage jobs. We must also ensure that colleges and universities are spending tax and tuition dollars wisely. They should be held accountable for retention and graduation rates, providing not only quality courses, but enhanced student support services that encourage students to complete their degree programs. Focusing on programs responsive to the needs of our economy will better prepare students for today's market. As head of the University of Louisiana System, I urged colleges and universities to identify areas of excellence, which discouraged duplicative programs, maximized financial resources, and promoted specialized, high-quality instruction and research to students statewide.

13. Other states provide significantly more funding to their "flagship" universities than Louisiana, recognizing that high-level research, training, and the influx of talented faculty and students contribute to economic growth. LSU is the state's only top-level doctoral and research institution as labeled by national classification systems and, thus, is our flagship. Do you support additional

funding to make LSU competitive with peer institutions? If so, how would you fund it and over what period of time?

As a nationally-competitive university, LSU could generate more than \$100 million more per year in federal research grants, keep more of our graduating high school seniors here in Louisiana, attract venture capital, and create thousands of jobs through technology transfer and business research and development investments. Success stories around the country like the pharmaceutical industry in New Jersey, software and biotechnology in Silicon Valley, investment banking in New York City, and medical devices in Boston are directly linked to the nationally-competitive academic research departments at nearby institutions. We can promote the same success here in Louisiana by prioritizing higher education investments to target academic disciplines important to existing industry sectors, promoting research partnerships between LSU and the business community, upgrading facilities, stimulating technology transfer, and enhancing the focus on graduate studies.

14. Louisiana's community and technical college system has continued to grow at an impressive pace since the late 1990s. But providing adequate rapid-market response for training, access for students, increasing the number of associate degree programs and creating high-school collaborations remain challenges for some regions and campuses. Please describe your goals for this system and what it will look like four years from now if you are elected.

Studies show that about 65 percent of current and future jobs require more training than high school but less than a four-year college degree. Studies also show that 20 percent of Louisiana adults aged 25 and older do not have a high school degree and only one in three high school students enter college. For this reason, our community and technical college system must provide accessible, affordable, high-quality programs for those students not going to a four-year institution. There is a growing interest in community and technical colleges. Baton Rouge Community College, for example, expects the current enrollment of more than 6,000 students to swell to 15,000 over the next four years. High wage jobs in professions ranging from welding to criminal justice to computer technology, among others, are growing in demand. The community and technical college system should serve as the epicenter of workforce training. These institutions must coordinate closely with business so that curriculum will meet identified shortage areas in the marketplace. Additionally, better coordination with high schools will help promote dual enrollment programs for students, and an expansion of online education opportunities will help working families, rural residents, and others take advantage of these critical programs.

PK-12 Education

15. Louisiana's School Accountability System is recognized as one of the best in the nation, yet almost every year there are efforts to change it in the Legislature. Please indicate whether you do or do not support the following key components of the system.
- a. High-stakes LEAP tests in grades 4 and 8?
Yes
 - b. Remediation and summer school for students who fail?
Yes
 - c. Annual School and District Performance Scores and labels?
Yes
 - d. Rewards for schools that improve?
Yes
 - e. Mandatory improvement plans and technical assistance for failing or low performing schools?
Yes
 - f. Recovery School District for chronically failing schools?

Yes

Optional comments:

Just as scores of studies in the private and public sector have shown, accountability is critically important to success if implemented fairly and accurately. Accountability in our educational system is no different. Setting standards without actually helping schools meet them defeats the purpose of a strong accountability system. State evaluations should include "value added" comparisons of student performance at the beginning of a year with that same student's performance at the end of an academic year to get the most accurate measure of that student's school. Ideally, our schools are best served by having responsible, dedicated leaders at the local level that make management decisions that best meet the needs of the communities. Any state-led effort to take over failing schools should ideally serve simply as the bridge to local communities and school boards taking the lead in operating schools.

16. Louisiana has raised teacher and principal pay for many years and has reached the southeastern regional average. While this is good and will help recruit talented people into teaching, there is no correlation between across-the-board pay scales and student achievement. Do you believe that Louisiana should offer teachers and principals performance-based pay or incentives in the future? If so, what kind? If not, why not?

If we want to inspire teachers to excel in the classroom, then we must provide more incentives and more upward mobility. Merit bonus programs are used in many other professions to promote excellence and should also be utilized in teaching, as a supplement to, and not a replacement for, pay raises. The Teacher Advancement Program (TAP), developed by the Milken Family Foundation and being tested in Louisiana, is a promising approach that judges teacher performance by peer evaluation and monitors student progress as they move through the school system. This is fairer than judging teachers based on the performance of a new set of students each year. Innovative bonus programs could target teachers who achieve certain performance measures, who teach in priority subject areas, who serve as mentors to other teachers, or who serve in rural or other under-served areas.

17. Public school "choice," particularly for students in low-performing or failing schools, covers a range of options: charter schools, autonomous schools, schools in the Recovery School District and vouchers. Please describe your position on choice in public education, specifically, what kind, if any you would support, increase or start in Louisiana. (limit 120 words)

Every parent wants their child to attend a good, safe school. Providing access to quality public education is one of the most important things we can do to move our state forward, create better paying jobs, and improve our quality of life. While our top priority must be to improve all of our schools, we cannot sentence any child to a poor education if they just happen to live within a certain geographical boundary. In a school system that has failed, like New Orleans, we need to be open to considering all options, including improving public schools, charter schools, and even private schools.

Before Katrina, the New Orleans Public School District was clearly troubled, with 75 percent of schools listed as failing or on academic warning, questionable administrative efforts, and millions of dollars unaccounted for in the budget. Today there are 43 charter schools, 20 Recovery School District-operated schools, and five Orleans Parish-operated schools. For the upcoming school year, the Recovery School District plans to open between nine and 16 additional campuses. This reform experiment in New Orleans will provide valuable insight on how best to use the resources of the state, while allowing parents and educators to develop a community model that benefits all families.

18. Because of persistently low academic indicators, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education has recommended programs and policies to improve high schools in Louisiana and make them more rigorous. What else would you do to address the issues facing high schools, especially as it relates to a) preparing more students to enter the workforce or community and technical colleges and b) keeping students in school so that they don't drop out? (limit 150 words)

Each year, roughly 10 percent of Louisiana high school students will drop out of school. We must do more to give these students better chances of success. An improved early warning system, utilizing teacher and parental input, can help lead to expanded remediation and summer “catch-up” programs to help struggling students rather than simply making them repeat a grade. Rather than just continuously holding back these children, we must help them earlier in the education process and provide effective remediation, skill training and GED preparation programs for those who have already been allowed to fall behind.

While not every student plans to go to college, we owe it to our high school students that they graduate able to meet either college or technical school requirements. Our students should understand that a growing number of today’s jobs require technical training but not always a college degree. Dual enrollment programs in high school can help students get a head start on acquiring community and technical school course credit and skills to prepare them for the workforce. We must inform students of the many career options available by beginning career-oriented counseling after 8th grade and expanding programs like those we initiated at the University of Louisiana System. Improved teacher/student ratios in schools, with a particular focus on smaller “learning communities” for certain grades (such as 9th and 12th), are critical to social and academic development.

19. If elected, what other specific plans would you propose to sustain or increase progress in our public schools? (limit 120 words)

We must better protect our teachers in the classroom. Louisiana ranks 39th out of 40 states reviewed recently for discipline. Each school should have detailed disciplinary procedures and our teachers must know that they will be supported by their principal, superintendant, school board, and ultimately parents when they enforce it.

Additionally, teachers should be given the tools to be successful. Teacher warranty programs, similar to those launched during my tenure at the University of Louisiana System, can help new teachers succeed and stay in the profession. Effective mentoring programs should be put in place so that effective teachers can work with their colleagues to improve performance and appreciation of successful techniques. We should also eliminate unnecessary paperwork requirements and other demands unrelated to classroom instruction. This burden affects not only our teachers, but also the guidance counselors and administrators in our schools. Any system put in place is only as effective as its ability to help teachers spend more time and focus on the critical mission of preparing our children for the opportunities that lay ahead.

Lastly, the Tuition Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) program has provided affordable access to higher education for many deserving students. TOPS has directly lead to many students taking a more rigorous high school curriculum, resulting in more high school graduates being better prepared for success in higher education or the workforce. Recent investments in needs-based programs to help make higher education more affordable for those with lower incomes are productive investments in the future of our state and its citizens. These grants will also help older students pursuing vocational training or a particular degree to meet the demands of a changing workforce.

Fiscal Responsibility / Tax Structure

20. Please name your five top budget priorities and list some places you would make budget cuts if needed. (limit 150 words)

We have a state government that has grown addicted to spending. In fact, the Legislature spent more than \$30 billion this year, double the amount from just six years ago. While some of these investments were for important items, such as pay raises for teachers and crucial funding for law enforcement, state spending is completely out of control. We simply must take better care of the taxpayers' money. I will prioritize spending that directly impacts job creation. My budget priorities will be to (1) target and eliminate wasteful spending and bureaucratic inefficiencies in government; (2) do away with slush funds and make spending more transparent to the taxpayer; (3) dedicate transportation-related revenue to improving our infrastructure; (4) provide meaningful tax relief that will stimulate investment in our economy; and (5) fund education in a way that demands accountability and rewards performance in our schools.

21. What changes, if any, would you propose to our tax structure (including changing taxes, repeal of taxes, tax credits and creation of incentives) to make Louisiana more competitive with other states?

Our state must stop driving away business investment and high-wage jobs by eliminating unorthodox taxes on business investment. Louisiana's "new job taxes" are some of the best weapons our neighboring states have going for them. Our tax structure, in relation to our neighboring states, is the dominant factor in our ability to keep our current jobs and attract new ones. We must give to Louisiana businesses the same relief given to individuals by eliminating the utility tax. The manufacturing machinery and equipment (MM&E) and the franchise tax on corporate debt taxes must be eliminated. In the past, the Legislature has unfortunately been quick to delay phase-outs in order to pay for other items. We must work to eliminate these taxes if we truly want to expand our economy, increase high-wage jobs, and attract business investment. Also, an increase in the research and development tax credit will help stimulate private investment into our research institutions.

Healthcare

22. There continues to be much talk about reforming the state-run Charity Hospital System. Suggestions have included closing hospitals or converting them to local ownership, using non-state facilities to provide more services, and expanding outpatient services to local communities. What do you believe is the long-term role of the LSU Charity Hospital System in Louisiana and what are your plans, if any, to specifically reform the system? (limit 200 words)

We should move to more regional governance, even as we keep the group purchasing savings of the LSU System. We started the option of local governance of outpatient services in Jefferson Parish, and then, while I was running the Department of Health and Hospitals, we expanded that to the Capitol Area region. The state should commit to local communities a base level of indigent funding so they keep additional revenues generated to give them incentives to operate efficiently. Some communities will choose to make capital investments to develop state of the art academic medical facilities, focusing on unique centers of excellence rather than duplicating programs. Others may choose to contract with the private sector to use existing excess capacity when it is more efficient to do so. Local communities can discover the efficiencies of integrating care, and providing one-stop services rather than offering citizens complicated bureaucracy. We should shift our emphasis to preventive, primary, and outpatient care to improve patient outcomes, lower the cost of health care, and reduce the burden on private providers.

23. There are questions surrounding the size and scope of the new public hospital being proposed for New Orleans. Action taken by the 2007 Legislature removed federal funding in favor of the state shouldering the entire financial burden for this project. Do you support building a new public hospital in New Orleans? If so, how should it be financed and what factors should be considered in determining its scope and size?

We must rebuild a replacement for Charity Hospital in New Orleans to help rebuild Southeast Louisiana's health care infrastructure. This effort should be pursued through partnership with the VA Medical Center and Tulane, sized appropriately to meet the population needs of the area, and with a focus on unique

services such as providing Level 1 Trauma Care. The construction of a new, top flight hospital would help Southeast Louisiana attract the doctors and nurses we need, provide improved medical training for residents, and attract medical and biomedical research companies and other health care-related businesses. This effort could help serve as the engine that drives the New Orleans recovery. I am proud to have fought diligently in Congress to help secure the \$550 million in funding for the VA Medical Center in New Orleans, along with the additional \$75 million for planning at the VA Hospital. A new Charity facility must be rebuilt to an appropriate size, recognizing that some prior patients are now permanently getting care elsewhere. Additionally, the region needs more neighborhood outpatient care. Rather than trying to be all things to all people or duplicate what is already available, we should use cost savings to allow some resources to follow the patient as they pursue preventative and primary care that best meet their needs.

24. Louisiana appears to be moving in conflicting directions when it comes to providing health care coverage for the uninsured. The Health Care Redesign Collaborative formed following the 2005 storms recommended providing private health care coverage for the uninsured and allow the money to follow the patient. The 2007 Legislature provided a small opportunity for uninsured children to be covered by private insurance while providing substantial funding for the public system. What is your position on covering the uninsured?

Louisiana must reform Medicaid through innovative waivers to cover more of the uninsured with existing dollars by encouraging private coverage. During my time working at the Department of Health and Human Services in Washington, we created models that are being used by other states to cover millions of people without incurring additional spending. Too often today, the working poor make enough to stay off welfare, but not enough to afford insurance. Many of these people do not get the preventative care they need and rely solely on the emergency room for their health care, resulting in poor health outcomes, uncompensated providers and higher prices for everyone else. More administrative flexibility can lead to customized benefits packages that can better meet the needs of working families, and help those families afford private coverage. We must provide small businesses and others more flexibility rather than requiring an "all-or-nothing" approach.

Public Safety

25. Louisiana has the highest incarceration rate and murder rate in the country. Voters continue to express serious concern about crime and their own personal safety. What can you do as governor to help increase public safety and reduce the high level of crime in our state? (limit 150 words)

Louisiana was recently ranked as the second most dangerous state in the country, behind only Nevada. Cities all across our state are seeing an increase in violent crime and Louisiana residents are crying out for a comprehensive plan to take back our neighborhoods and schools. We must first give law enforcement and prosecutors the tools they need to put criminals behind bars. I sponsored legislation in Congress to authorize a grant program to help states implement a state-of-the-art criminal database that will allow all levels of law enforcement to better track criminals, arrests, prosecutions, and convictions. We must also stop the cycle of repeat offenders by reforming our juvenile justice system, putting real teeth in the witness intimidation statute, and partnering with local law enforcement to target "hot spots" for intense drug and crime activity. We must also increase criminal penalties, especially to protect our children from violence or sexual predators. Sexual predators must know that if they hunt our children over the Internet, on playgrounds, schools, or anywhere else, they will be punished severely. One strike is all they will get.

Coastal Restoration and Protection

26. Louisiana's coastal wetlands are eroding at an alarming rate. Communities, industries, our economy and a vast eco-system are all threatened if this continues unabated. Through both federal and state sources billions of dollars will be available for wetland restoration and hurricane protection

in the next several years. What would you do as governor to ensure that these tax dollars will be used wisely, based on sound science and planning, and that these efforts will be held accountable for results? (limit 150 words)

Our coastline is disappearing right before our eyes. We can no longer pursue study after study, or simply rely on tough rhetoric. It is now time for aggressive action to stop this ongoing natural disaster. If left unchecked, the cultural, economic, and environmental implications of this will be devastating as South Louisiana becomes even more vulnerable to flooding and hurricanes, the nation's energy supply is put at greater risk, and a nationally important ecological system continues to be destroyed.

Numerous restoration plans have been drafted through the years, including COAST 2050, the Louisiana Coastal Area Study and the most recent Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority Master Plan. What was once considered to be a \$14 billion dollar project may very well now exceed \$50 billion. In Congress, I sponsored legislation that will secure billions of dollars from the state's share of Outer Continental Shelf revenues and dedicate these dollars to coastal protection.

Additionally, I worked to help pass the 2007 Water Resources and Development Act (WRDA) in the House of Representatives. WRDA authorizes more than \$3 billion to help restore Louisiana's wetlands and increase hurricane and flood protections over the next decade, including the Morganza to the Gulf project, a plan for the closure and environmental restoration of the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet (MRGO), Ouachita River Levees, the Atchafalaya Basin Floodway System, and Red River Waterway mitigation. If this legislation is passed by the Senate and signed into law, we can then pursue these needed dollars through the appropriation process, prioritizing projects that have been identified as critical to our near term survival and that can be placed on a fast track through design, engineering and construction. This would include such projects as barrier island restoration, marsh creation through dedicated dredging, pipeline sediment slurry projects and closing the MRGO. Meanwhile, large scale long term river diversion projects that require separate federal feasibility studies should also begin. The state must limit dollars spent on administrative costs and pursue bonds to expedite these projects.

Public Trust

27. Voters continue to express deep concerns about political corruption, conflicts of interest and the desire for more open government. Several substantive ethics reform proposals have been consistently defeated over recent years. Which, if any, of the following reforms would your administration introduce as legislation and actively support?

Prohibit legislators from accepting tickets to sporting and cultural events from lobbyists

Legislative financial disclosure

Disclosure of information about nonprofit or other non-governmental organizations that receive "earmark" funding through legislative amendments to the budget

Prohibit legislators from doing business with the state unless contracts are competitively bid

Disclosure of information related to lobbying activities

Prohibit elected officials from using their own Political Action Committees (PACS) or campaign funds to support other candidates for office

Other ethics, campaign or lobbyist reforms. (Please list)

For too long, corruption in our state has eroded the confidence of businesses, deterred investment in Louisiana and hurt our economic development. Corruption may be part of our past, but it will not be part of our future. We must demand an honest government that puts the residents of our state first and the special interests last. I unveiled a 31 point plan to tear corruption and incompetence out by the roots.

The five pillars of my ethics reform plan are (1) you cannot be a lobbyist and a legislator; (2) we must require full financial disclosures for legislators; (3) you cannot serve in government and do business with the government; (4) we need to shine the light of day on all lobbying activities; and (5) we must demand consistent, independent enforcement of ethics laws. If elected, I will call my first special session for the sole purpose of considering comprehensive ethics reform, sending a clear signal to officials and business leaders across the country that Louisiana is serious when we say we are open for business.

Staff Signature _____ Candidate Signature _____

Date _____

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