

PAR

LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

Vol. 7 No. 1

Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana, Inc.

May 19, 1959

Legislative Scholarships

HB. 93 would appropriate \$778,000 to the Legislative Student Aid Fund for legislative scholarships--an increase of \$185,200 over the present appropriation of \$592,800. This bill would allow each representative \$4,800 in scholarship funds a year and each senator \$6,000--an increase of \$1,200 for each legislator. It would increase funds for the governor and lieutenant governor by \$5,000 each to \$30,000 and \$22,000 respectively. The speaker of the house would be allowed \$12,000 compared to the present \$3,600.

Present Criticisms

This bill for legislative scholarships would continue and expand a program which has been subjected to the following criticisms:

1. It has been created and expanded from time to time without benefit of study to determine what funds are needed to provide money for student assistance.
2. The program has no requirement for awards to be based on scholarship of the recipients or their need for assistance in order to attend college.
3. The allocation of amounts to each representative and senator on an equal basis gives no recognition to differences in population or need that may exist in various sections of the state.
4. There is no recognition given recommendations of the State Board of Education and the Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors for allocation of scholarship money to the institutions so that they might award scholarships to deserving students who need assistance. The Legislative Scholarship Fund, if transferred to these institutions for administration, would serve the state better than the present program does.

At present the only scholarship money available to the institutions of higher education are athletic scholarships, except for fee exemption scholarships which are for minor amounts.

5. The continued limitation of \$300 as the maximum grant to any student, established in 1948, is unrealistic now in the face of rising costs and should be relaxed to permit higher awards if requirements of scholarships and need are written into the program.
6. Present funds are very often disbursed in such small amounts to students as to make them of inconsequential value in meeting the student's educational costs and therefore of questionable value to the state.
7. Administration of the funds is on an informal basis with detailed reporting of expenditures unavailable on a central basis.

ground

Legislative scholarships were first authorized in 1948 with an appropriation of \$185,000-- the amount of the presently proposed increase. The original act limited each legislator and the lieutenant governor to \$1,200 a year and the governor to \$17,000. The appropriation has been increased every two years since then, except for the 1958 session when the amount was continued at the level of the previous year.

Since inauguration of the program, a limit of \$300 a year has been placed on the amount a legislator, the governor, or lieutenant governor may award to any student. For several years a limit of \$300 has been in effect on the amount a student may receive in a fiscal year, thus eliminating the possibility of a student receiving more than \$300 by obtaining grants from several legislators.

Present Practices

A great disparity exists in the practices of legislators, the governor and lieutenant governor in awarding the scholarships. This is revealed in a review of amounts granted students for the fiscal year 1957-58.

One senator, for example, granted scholarships to 127 students. The average of his grants was \$36 per student, with the range from \$25 to \$100. Another senator awarded only 30 scholarships for an average of \$153, with the range from \$100 to \$300.

One representative awarded 152 scholarships for an average award of \$23, with 17 at \$12.50, and a range from \$12.50 to \$235. Another awarded 120 scholarships with an average of \$30 per student, and a range from \$25 to \$75. In another case, a representative awarded 24 students scholarships of \$10 each. Such awards give the appearance of political favors, since they are too small to be of much value to a student seeking a college education.

On the other hand, one representative awarded only 13 scholarships with all of them at the maximum of \$300, except for one at \$100 and the other at \$200.

A very large proportion of scholarships was awarded for \$25 and \$50 apiece.

While the law makes no requirement that scholarships be awarded on any standard of merit or need, nor sets any minimum on the award to any student, it is questionable whether awards as low as \$10, or even \$50 a year do much toward assisting a student through college. This does, however, open the way for granting many favors on a political basis. One legislator, who awards few scholarships and those for substantial amounts, gets advice from school officials as to students who are good scholars and need aid in order to go to college. It is obvious that few legislators grant scholarships on this basis, however.

Administration of Program

As the program is now administered, each legislator is provided with books of printed warrants (similar to checks) in the amounts of \$25 and \$50. Legislators fill in the name of the student and designate the school to which the money is payable for the account of the student. Some legislators give several warrants to a single student to whom they wish to award more than \$25 or \$50. Others strike out the printed amounts and write in the sums they wish to award. Amounts for the governor and lieutenant governor are left blank in the warrants.

The average number of warrants issued by legislators was 104 in 1957-58 and the average amount was \$38. The average warrant for the governor was about \$70 and for the lieutenant governor about \$110. There were 15,098 warrants issued. (This does not represent the number of students receiving grants, since a number of students received several warrants each.)

The state comptroller maintains a record of warrants issued by each legislator, the governor, and lieutenant governor. The institutions of higher education maintain records of legislative grants to each student and check to see that no student receives more than \$300 in any fiscal year. If students receive aid from more than one legislator, the amounts are consolidated on the college records of the students.

Where students drop out of college before using up their grants, legislators authorizing

the assistance are notified. In some cases, legislators authorize the institutions to transfer the credits to other students. No notice is required to be filed with the comptroller's office on these transfers. If money allocated is not used, it reverts to the state treasury.

Officials report that in almost all cases legislative scholarship money is used to pay costs charged to the students' accounts by the institutions. However, it is possible for a student to withdraw cash, if purposes are approved by officials of the institutions.

Following is a table showing the percentage of legislative scholarship funds used by students attending the institutions of higher education:

Louisiana State University	37.7 %	Southern University	6.3
Southwestern Louisiana Institute	13.6	Northeast State College	5.4
Louisiana Polytechnic Institute	10.8	McNeese State College	3.3
Northwestern State College	10.6	Grambling College	2.7
Southeastern Louisiana College	8.3	Francis T. Nicholls	1.2

Comment

A good scholarship program should be administered by groups or agencies organized to select students who merit aid on the basis of scholarship and who need financial assistance in order to attend college.

The legislative scholarship program is administered by elected officials without any requirement to recognize merit or need. While it can be assumed that merit and need are recognized in a number of cases, it is evident from the records that these criteria are not applied in many and perhaps a majority of cases. As the program is operated, there is no more reason to assign authority to legislators, the governor and lieutenant governor for distributing this money than to any other citizen. The present system opens the way to political favoritism.

The Louisiana Commission on Higher Education reviewed this and other student aid programs in its study of higher education in 1955-56. Concerning these programs, the commission said:

"The student aid program appears to be lacking in philosophy, objectives and organization. The bases of awards and objectives of the program are questionable, and coordination is inadequate."

The commission recommended development of a statewide student aid program with definite policies and criteria for making awards. Once established, the commission said, "The programs can be administered by Louisiana State University and the State Department of Education."

The State Board of Education and the LSU Board of Supervisors have recently recommended the allocation of scholarship funds to the institutions of higher education to be awarded by them on a basis of merit and need.

An alternative to the present legislative scholarship program might be the transfer of responsibility for administering the funds and making the awards to a committee of the state colleges and LSU with requirements that students meet scholarship standards and that they be assisted only to the extent of need.

The Legislature should also inquire into the need for more assistance to students before approving a 31 per cent increase in the funds.

In the administration of the present program, it would be desirable to have a complete accounting to a central state agency for disbursement of the funds. Acceptance of handwritten alterations in the warrants could lead to abuses.

Another alternative to a grant-in-aid scholarship program would be a non-profit corporation authorized to lend money to students, as proposed in HB 179. An appropriation of \$25,000 by the state is proposed in the bill. The corporation would be authorized to accept grants from private sources to make loans to students.

Capital Outlay for Higher Education

HB 143 would appropriate \$8,658,000 in mineral bonus revenues to the nine state colleges and \$8,050,000 to Louisiana State University in fiscal 1959-60, for capital outlay. The bill, introduced by administration floor leaders, would also provide \$12.5 million from bonus revenues for highways and \$5 million for salary increases and retirement costs for teachers, school bus operators, and other school employees.

The \$34.2 million of appropriations proposed under HB 143 would be contingent upon receipt of bonus revenues in fiscal 1959-60. The appropriations would be made in the following order, after the existing constitutional dedication of \$2.5 million to highways is met:

(1) \$8,658,000 to state colleges, listed as follows:	
Nicholls State College, Thibodaux	\$ 500,000
Grambling College, Grambling	908,000
Louisiana Polytechnic Institute, Ruston	1,000,000
McNeese State College, Lake Charles	800,000
Northeast State College, Monroe	850,000
Northwestern State College, Natchitoches	850,000
Southeastern Louisiana College, Hammond	1,000,000
Southern University	
Baton Rouge campus	900,000
New Orleans campus	850,000
Southwestern Louisiana Institute	1,000,000
Total State Colleges	<u>\$8,658,000</u>
(2) Louisiana State University	
New Orleans campus	\$6,800,000
Baton Rouge campus	900,000
Subtotal LSU	<u>\$7,700,000</u>
(3) State Department of Highways	\$7,500,000
(4) Salary increases for teachers, bus drivers, and other school employees, and employer's contribution to school retirement systems on such increases	\$5,000,000
(5) Chambers facility of LSU	\$ 350,000
(6) State Department of Highways	<u>\$5,000,000</u>
Total HB 143	\$34,208,000

Needs of the State Colleges

HB 143 does not specify the types of buildings or other facilities for which funds would be provided to each state college. However, in most cases the amounts to be provided for capital outlay on the older campuses are either smaller than or do not significantly exceed the total of unmet building needs on those campuses to 1960-61, as projected by the Louisiana Commission on Higher Education in its 1956 report. In the two cases in which needs as projected by the commission have already been met by legislative appropriation (Southern and Grambling), enrollment increases have been greater than the commission estimated, and thus tend to justify expenditures beyond those recommended by the commission.

The \$850,000 proposed in HB 143 for Northwestern State College at Natchitoches would exceed the Commission on Higher Education's estimate of total publicly financed capital needs for

institution as far ahead as 1970-71. The commission recommended \$600,000 for expenditure of library facilities by 1960-61 as Northwestern's only construction or replacement need to be financed with public funds in the entire period to 1970-71. However, more important is the question whether some part of the amount to be provided by HB 143 would be used for student housing at Natchitoches, a capital need which the Commission on Higher Education strongly recommended should be financed with its own revenues rather than with public funds. While the bill does not specify the use to be made of the funds, the building priority program for state colleges adopted by the State Board of Education on May 7, 1959, listed only student housing and utilities improvements as priorities for Northwestern. If any part of the money provided for Northwestern in HB 143 were used for student housing, this use would be in direct contravention of the commission's recommendations.

Other Proposed Capital Outlay

HB 167 would appropriate \$33.5 million out of the general fund in fiscal 1959-60 to Southwestern Louisiana Institute at Lafayette for capital outlay. The Commission on Higher Education estimated that \$4.9 million in public funds would be needed to meet SLI's construction and replacement needs to 1970-71. As of fall 1958, SLI's full-time equivalent enrollment was 80.7 per cent of the full-time equivalent enrollment projected for that institution in 1960-61.

Commuter's College at Chambers

HB 131 would appropriate \$650,000 out of the general fund in fiscal 1959-60 to expand LSU's vocational agriculture facilities at Chambers into a two-year commuter's college. This amount would be in addition to the \$350,000 proposed under HB 143 for capital outlay at the Chambers facility.

Congressional authorization to use the land at Chambers for general educational purposes would have to be obtained before the money appropriated under HB 131 could be withdrawn from the state treasury. The land was acquired as a grant from the federal government for agricultural and vocational training.

HB 131 stipulates that the expansion contemplated at Chambers is no more than would be suitable and appropriate for the operation of a two-year commuter's college "unless further expansion or extension" is submitted to the electorate for approval.

Need for the College

Two-year commuter colleges may have several advantages if they are properly planned and located so as to provide easily accessible education for an adequate number of students. If classes are large enough, junior college costs are generally lower per student than costs at institutions offering senior college and graduate instruction. There is less need for expensive laboratory equipment, libraries are smaller and less specialized, and faculty salaries may be lower at junior colleges. In addition, at a commuter's college there is the obvious advantage to students of living at home and avoiding dormitory and some cafeteria costs, and to the college in not having to provide residential facilities and some auxiliary services.

Disadvantages of junior colleges are: (1) the possibility of courses watered down to less than college level; (2) difficulty in attracting competent faculty to teach only beginning courses; (3) weaknesses in library and laboratory areas, which cannot be as complete as such areas in colleges offering senior courses; and (4) the need to transfer to another institution to complete degree work. Opponents of junior colleges argue that the money spent in building and operating such institutions could be better spent in expanding and strengthening four-year colleges.

Population Factors

The chief advantage which any new institution of higher education can have is its location in a center of population which promises a growing student body. This is doubly true in the case of a commuter's college which must depend entirely upon the surrounding area for its clientele.

There is a serious question whether a college located at Chambers, which is about ten miles from Alexandria, would have such an advantage.

College-Age Population Changes: Rapides Parish and the seven parishes immediately surrounding it can expect an increase in total college-age population of 32.7 per cent from 1950 to 1970, according to projections prepared by the Louisiana Commission on Higher Education. By comparison, the state's total college-age population is expected to increase 81.0 per cent over the same period. The white college-age population in the eight-parish area around Chambers is expected to increase 30.7 per cent, as compared to a projected increase of 83.2 per cent in the state's white college-age population. (See table below.)

INCREASES IN COLLEGE-AGE AND TOTAL POPULATION

Area	Total Pop. Aged 18-24			White Pop. Aged 18-24			Est. Increase in Total Pop., 1950 to 1958**
	1950	Est. 1970*	% Incr.	1950	Est. 1970*	% Incr.	
STATE	296,264	536,300	81.0	199,748	365,961	83.2	16.6
8-Parish Area	26,345	34,971	32.7	18,448	24,115	30.7	10.1
Rapides	9,174	16,061	75.1	6,099	10,763	76.5	13.1
Allen	1,829	2,621	43.3	1,424	1,982	39.2	13.0
Avoyelles	3,703	4,084	10.3	2,611	2,803	7.4	6.4
Evangeline	3,345	3,969	18.7	2,427	2,730	12.5	14.9
Grant	1,234	1,138	- 7.8	857	785	- 8.4	- 3.7
LaSalle	1,144	1,287	12.5	1,011	1,167	15.4	12.7
Natchitoches	4,372	4,123	- 5.7	2,665	2,373	-11.0	- 2.0
Vernon	1,544	1,688	9.3	1,354	1,512	11.7	25.2

* Projections prepared for Louisiana Commission on Higher Education.

** Estimated by Louisiana Department of Public Welfare

With the exception of Rapides Parish, no parish in the area is expected to show an increase in college-age population which approaches the increase projected for the state by 1970-71. Some show decreases.

Projected increases are shown for total college-age population as well as for white college-age population because it is felt that the college at Chambers would have much the same experience with court orders to integrate as the other state colleges and LSU have had. To avoid this, a state college for Negroes would also have to be planned in the near vicinity of Alexandria.

Total Population Changes: The projections of college-age population to 1970-71 are borne out by estimates of changes in the total population in the area between 1950 and 1958, prepared by the Louisiana Department of Public Welfare. That department estimates that the total population of the eight-parish area increased 10.1 per cent from 1950 to 1958, as compared with a 16.6 per cent increase for the state as a whole. The estimated changes for the various parishes are also shown in the table above.

Effect on Other Colleges

A very important consideration in establishing a new college is its effect on future enrollments of other colleges in the area. The eight-parish area surrounding Chambers already has one state-supported college at Natchitoches (Northwestern) and a private college at Pineville (Louisiana College). Northwestern is actually in a parish showing a declining total and college-age population, and can little afford the competition of another state-supported college in an adjoining parish.

The effect on the future enrollments of the state colleges at Monroe, Ruston, and Lafayette should also be considered. This effect would be particularly important if the college at Chambers should follow the example of all other state-supported junior colleges to date in becoming four-year colleges.

Compensation of District Attorneys

HB 124 would eliminate the fee system for compensating district attorneys in ten judicial districts. The ten districts where fees are paid by parishes in lieu of salaries are:

First (Caddo)	Eleventh (DeSoto, Sabine)
Third (Lincoln, Union)	Fourteenth (Calcasieu, Cameron)
Fourth (Morehouse, Ouachita)	Twentieth (E. Feliciana, W. Feliciana)
Eighth (Grant, Winn)	Twenty-Sixth (Bossier, Webster)
Ninth (Rapides)	Thirtieth (Beauregard, Vernon)

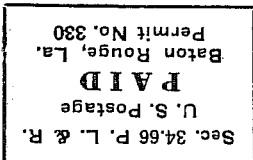
HB 124 would also increase the salary of the district attorney in the 19th Judicial District (East Baton Rouge) by \$1,000, to be paid by the parish. HB 125 would increase the salary of the district attorney in Orleans by \$2,500, to be paid by the parish.

Compensation presently provided district attorneys and proposed changes are shown in the table below.

Annual Compensation of District Attorneys

<u>Judicial District</u>	<u>Present Law¹</u>	<u>Proposed¹</u>
1st (Caddo)	\$ 5,000*	\$ 16,000
2nd (Bienville, Claiborne, Jackson)	9,300	9,300
3rd (Lincoln, Union)	5,000*	8,500
4th (Morehouse, Ouachita)	5,000*	16,000
5th (Franklin, Richland, W. Carroll)	9,800	9,800
6th (E. Carroll, Madison, Tensas)	6,500	6,500
7th (Catahoula, Concordia)	6,500	6,500
8th (Grant, Winn)	5,000*	8,500
9th (Rapides)	5,000*	16,000
10th (Natchitoches, Red River)	11,000	11,000
11th (DeSoto, Sabine)	5,000*	8,500
12th (Avoyelles)	8,600	8,600
13th (Evangeline)	6,500	6,500
14th (Calcasieu, Cameron)	5,000*	16,000
15th (Acadia, Lafayette, Vermillion)	10,400 ²	10,400 ²
16th (Iberia, St. Martin, St. Mary)	10,400	10,400
17th (Lafourche, Terrebonne)	6,500	6,500
18th (Iberville, Pointe Coupee, W. Baton Rouge)	7,500	7,500
19th (E. Baton Rouge)	15,000	16,000 ³
20th (E. Feliciana, W. Feliciana)	5,000*	8,500 ⁴
21st (Tangipahoa, Livingston, St. Helena)	8,500	8,500
22nd (Washington, St. Tammany)	7,500	7,500
23rd (Assumption, Ascension, St. James)	6,500	6,500
24th (Jefferson)	11,000	11,000
25th (St. Bernard, Plaquemines)	7,200	7,200
26th (Bossier, Webster)	5,000*	8,500
27th (St. Landry)	8,200	8,200
28th (Caldwell, LaSalle)	8,000	8,000
29th (St. Charles, St. John the Baptist)	7,400	7,400
30th (Beauregard, Vernon)	5,000*	8,500
31st (Jefferson Davis, Allen)	8,600	8,600
Orleans	15,000	17,500 ⁵

- * Plus fees. The Legislature has not fixed a salary to be paid by parishes.
- ¹ \$5,000 of this amount is paid by the state and the balance by the parishes in all districts but Orleans. In Orleans, the state pays \$7,600 and the parish the remainder.
- ² Parishes may pay up to an additional \$3,000 a year.
- ³ The proposed increase would be paid by East Baton Rouge Parish.
- ⁴ HB 124 provides that the parishes pay \$3,500 (in addition to the \$5,000 paid by the state), but the amounts to be paid by each of the two parishes total only \$3,400.
- ⁵ Proposed by HB 125. The increase would be paid by Orleans Parish.



PUBLIC AFFAIRS RESEARCH COUNCIL OF LA., INC.
BATON ROUGE, LA. POST OFFICE BOX 2748

Constitutional Provisions

The state constitution, as originally adopted in 1921, has specific provisions pertaining to the compensation of district attorneys. It provides that the state pay a portion of their salaries. (A 1952 act sets this amount at \$5,000 a year in all districts but Orleans. In Orleans the state pays \$7,600.)

The constitution further provides that district attorneys be paid such additional salary as is set by the Legislature. This additional salary is to be paid by the parish or parishes composing the judicial district in which the district attorney is elected. It prohibits district attorneys from receiving "fees of any kind." The 1921 constitution directed the legislature, "at its next session, regular or special, to fix the salaries of the various district attorneys, payable by the parish or parishes situated within the several judicial districts of the State." (Article VII, Section 59.) Article VII, Section 64 stipulated that the constitutional provisions relative to salaries of district attorneys were to go into effect immediately upon adoption of the 1921 constitution, "except that until the Legislature shall fix the salaries to be paid by the parishes, the district attorneys shall receive in lieu hereof, fees under existing laws." After the Legislature fixed salaries to be paid by parishes, "all moneys collected by the district attorney as conviction fees under existing laws shall be paid into the parish treasury."

Comment

It seems obvious that constitutional intent, since 1921, has been to abolish the fee system as a means of compensating district attorneys and to place them on a salary basis instead. Although the constitution states that district attorneys may receive fees in lieu of salaries paid by parishes, this was to apply only until the Legislature fixed the amount of salaries to be paid by parishes. The constitution specifies that the Legislature was to take such action "at its next session, regular or special" following adoption of the constitution in 1921. To date, the Legislature has failed to follow this constitutional directive in ten judicial districts. HB 124 would thus carry out what the constitution intended be done since 1921.

There are a number of severe criticisms against use of the fee system to compensate public officials. The payment of fees instead of a stipulated salary was initiated years ago in rural areas because it was felt that jobs were too small to warrant a salary. Today, fees may be sizeable. Under present practices, there is no public accounting for nor reporting of fees received by district attorneys. Thus, it is not possible to evaluate the compensation received to see if amounts are reasonable, and in line with the job performed and compensation paid other public officials. Compensation should be established on the basis of the responsibilities and duties of the position. Moreover, the public has a right to expect full accounting for public funds.