

Mailing:

P.O. Box 3808
Baton Rouge, LA 70821

Physical:

8281 Goodwood Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70806

Phone: 225-929-5266

Fax: 225-925-2711

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2009**

Contact: Edward Ashworth, 225.929.5266, x224

**STATE STREAMLINING COMMISSION SHOULD EXPLAIN
WHERE COST SAVINGS COMING FROM**

Budget Watchdog Calls for Fiscal Notes on Recommendations

BATON ROUGE – The state Streamlining Government Commission has released 80 proposals it says would save Louisiana money – but in the absence of clear information on where the money would come from, it’s impossible for the public to judge whether they’re worth it.

To address this, the Louisiana Budget Project (LBP) calls on the Chair of the Commission to make public all financial information prepared in conjunction with the Commission’s recommendations.

“Louisiana faces severe declines in revenue in the next two years. It is critically important that the Streamlining Commission be completely transparent when making recommendations on where to cut spending and how to achieve efficiencies in state government,” said Edward Ashworth, LBP Director, in a letter to Commission Chair Jack Donahue. “Louisiana has a long history of balancing the budget on the backs of higher education, healthcare, and social services, with a disproportionate impact on Louisiana’s most vulnerable citizens.”

Many of the Commission’s recommendations have specific cost savings attached. But only by providing the fiscal notes to the Commission’s recommendations can the public and the media see where cuts are being proposed and who is bearing the impact of them. “Putting the information in the public domain will allow informed analysis and public comment,” Ashworth said.

In its letter, LBP said, “A better understanding of how the projected cost savings are being achieved may suggest other solutions.” LBP’s letter stresses the need for a “balanced approach” to closing Louisiana’s budget gap that includes additional revenue as well as expected cuts in spending.

“Louisiana cannot cut its way out of this problem without severely hurting Louisiana’s poor, disadvantaged minority, and disabled citizens. At some



www.labudget.org

Mailing:

P.O. Box 3808

Baton Rouge, LA 70821

Physical:

8281 Goodwood Blvd.

Baton Rouge, LA 70806

Phone: 225-929-5266

Fax: 225-925-2711

point, the Governor and the Legislature have to consider ways to increase revenues," Ashworth said.

For a copy of LBP's letter to the Chair of the Commission or for more information on Louisiana's budget issues, contact the Louisiana Budget Project at 225.929.5266 or visit www.labudget.org.

#