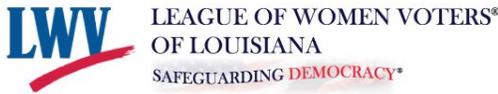




RURAL HOSPITAL COALITION



ADVOCACY CENTER OF LOUISIANA  
SERVING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND SENIOR CITIZENS



The Honorable  
John Alario, President  
Louisiana Senate

The Honorable  
Taylor Barras, Speaker  
Louisiana House of Representatives

Cc: Gov. John Bel Edwards  
Rep. Cameron Henry, Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations

April 13, 2018

Dear President Alario and Speaker Barras:

The undersigned health care advocacy and stakeholder organizations urge you to call an end to the 2018 regular legislative session well before the scheduled end date of June 4. Ending the regular session in May rather than June is critical to allow legislators enough time to pass tax revenue measures that are necessary for continuing services for the most vulnerable Louisianans: those who are elderly and disabled.

We know that the increase in state revenue resulting from the federal tax changes will not be enough to replace all of the temporary revenue that will expire on June 30. As you know, if only a portion of the budget shortfall is addressed, you and your fellow legislators will be left in the undesirable position of having to choose which health care services to eliminate or reduce, or whether to adequately fund institutions of higher education over health care providers.

Waiting until June to begin the discussion over how to address the budget shortfall would bring the state dangerously close to the July 1 deadline to enact tax measures and pass a budget. Waiting would only exacerbate the uncertainty and worry of hundreds of thousands of patients who do not know whether their health care services will continue beyond June. We understand that you and your fellow members have a monumental task ahead when it comes to addressing the fiscal matters of the state. We urge you to begin that work sooner rather than later.

Sincerely,

Gerrelde Davis, Louisiana Primary Care Association

Charles Castille, Louisiana Rural Hospital Coalition

Ashley Politz, Louisiana Chapter of the American Association of Pediatrics

Denise Bottcher, AARP of Louisiana

Susan Meyers, Advocacy Center of Louisiana

Anthony Germade Jr., NAMI Louisiana (National Alliance on Mental Illness)

Mike Martyn, Coalition of Louisiana Addiction Service & Prevention Providers (CLASPP)

Janet Pace, Volunteers of America of Greater Baton Rouge

Chuck Meehan, Volunteers of America North Louisiana

James LeBlanc, Volunteers of America Southeast Louisiana

Alma C. Stewart, Louisiana Center for Health Equity

Susan East Nelson, Louisiana Partnership for Children and Families

Susan Todd, 504HealthNet

Jan Moller, Louisiana Budget Project

Carol DeVille, League of Women Voters of Louisiana