Louisiana’s incredible diversity is one of our state’s greatest strengths. But at the Louisiana Budget Project, we also know that all of us want the same things: The ability to put food on the table for our families. The right to see a doctor when we get sick. And access to good jobs that pay a living wage. Most of all, we want our children to have more opportunities than we had to build a better life.

We also know that policy decisions made by our elected officials at the state Capitol have a profound impact on Louisiana families’ ability to access opportunity and thrive. This is why the Louisiana Budget Project and our partners fight every day for sensible policy solutions and smart investments that will lay the foundation for thriving communities and shared prosperity for all Louisianans. Our staff works every day to provide the research and advocacy tools that help citizens and grassroots organizations be more vocal about the policy issues that matter to them. With your help, we educate policymakers about the economic and racial barriers that Louisianans face each day, and propose solutions that would make our economy more equitable. In short, we work to create a state where our residents aren’t just getting by, but they’re getting ahead.
A Look Back at 2019

2019 was a busy year for LBP and the state of Louisiana. The year started off with the months-long political stalemate at the Revenue Estimating Conference caused by a partisan refusal to update the state’s revenue forecast. This was followed by a legislative session that was a mixed bag, as lawmakers were able to make new investments in things like public education and infrastructure, but dropped the ball when it came to increasing the minimum wage and establishing a statewide paid leave policy. The year continued with the launch of LBP’s first proactive agenda campaign. Finally the year ended with massive statewide elections. LBP was there every step of the way, providing independent research, advocacy and education with the goal of creating an economy that works for everyone. Below are a few of our highlights.

- Provided analysis and testimony for successful pay raises for teachers and support staff and additional money for school districts.
- Took a lead role in researching and advocating for what a comprehensive, affordable paid leave program would look like in Louisiana.
- Joined Unleash Local, a broad grassroots coalition led by labor and community groups fighting for local control over worker policies.
- Partnered with the Power Coalition for Equity and Justice to educate, engage and turn out historical numbers of voters of color.
- Launched Invest in Louisiana, a proactive issue-based campaign that aims to create a new vision for Louisiana.
- Participated in the Investing In Louisiana’s Children tour that mapped out recommendations to maintain progress on policy objectives for children.

Please consider a contribution to LBP, which will help support the hard work of our staff and ensure the needs of low-income families are considered in policy debates at the state Capitol and beyond.
Invest in Louisiana is a campaign to ensure that our state invests in us, so that together, we can build a future of shared prosperity. The campaign kicked off in April with a webinar that unveiled the pillars and goals of what it means to put people first in Louisiana. The campaign then started to build a focus during the legislative session on prioritizing our communities, workers, children and families so Louisiana can create a more inclusive economy that better the lives of all.

We kicked off the inaugural Invest in Louisiana Policy Conference in August, with a focus on racial equity. The conference brought more than 200 Louisianans together to discuss the need for a progressive agenda in our state. During election season, the campaign sent out letters and information on our platform to every candidate that filed for legislative office. We will continue to promote this campaign because simply put, we, the people of Louisiana, are our state’s best investment. Invest in Louisiana is excited to become more engaged with the community, policy proposals and civic engagement in the upcoming year.

For more information on Invest in Louisiana, please visit www.investlouisiana.org
While LBP is a research-based policy organization, our work doesn’t stop there. We take our research and use it to create action throughout Louisiana. We do this by testifying at the Legislature, meeting with elected officials, giving presentations to community organizations and much more. Below are some examples of LBP in action.

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**Policy Director Stacey Roussel outlines the shortcomings of a bill aiming to protect consumers in the event the Affordable Care Act is overturned.**

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**Policy Analyst Neva Butkus and Communications Director Jamie Carson participate in Louisiana Public Broadcasting's Public Square.**

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**Public Affairs and Outreach Coordinator Davante Lewis leads a workshop at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities' annual Impact Conference.**

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**Executive Director Jan Moller discusses LBP's work to support children and their families.**

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Thanks to your support, in 2019 LBP:

- ...was mentioned in 280+ news stories
- ...was cited in 5 editorials
- ...published or influenced 14 opinion pieces
- ...appeared on TV or radio 15+ times
- ...started our first podcast, “Didja Know?”
- ...published 200+ editions of LBP’s daily newsletter, the Daily Dime

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It’s easy to make the case for a higher minimum wage in Louisiana. The state has one of the highest rates of poverty in the nation. Louisiana also has one of the highest percentages of workers who earn at or below the current $7.25 per hour minimum wage. In April 2018, a report from the Louisiana Budget Project estimated that 193,000 Louisiana workers – almost 1 in 10 – would get a pay raise if the state set a minimum wage of $8.50 per hour.

(The Times-Picayune Editorial Board, April 29, 2019)