

Citizens for 1 Greater New Orleans focused on the following legislative efforts during the 2010 Spring Fiscal Session of the Legislature, and the outcomes are as follows:

LEGISLATIVE SESSION 2010 - OVERVIEW

LEVEES

Legislation:

HB 646, sponsored by REP. Jared Brossett, proposed adding a representative from Louisiana Engineering Society to the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority (SLFPA)

Nominating Committee.

Position/Outcome

Citizens for 1 supported this bill, which became ACT 97 effective August 15.

Legislation:

SB 772, sponsored by SEN. J. P. Morrell, proposed a separate board to manage and control the New Orleans Lakefront Airport, considered a non-flood asset of SLFPA.

Position/Outcome:

Citizens for 1 opposed this bill and testified in the House Transportation Committee. This bill passed the Senate, but died on the House floor.

Legislation:

SB 804, sponsored by SEN. J. P. Morrell, proposed removing the management of non-flood assets, such as marinas, boat-houses and land used for recreation at the New Orleans lakefront from SLFPA to a newly created board.

Position/Outcome:

Citizens for 1 opposed this bill and testified in the House Transportation Committee.

This bill was amended several times to exclude elected officials and to include community representatives. It passed and became Act 1014.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Legislation:

HB 1, sponsored by REP. Jim Fannin, proposed a \$5 million reduction to the budget proposed by the Governor for the state public defender's board. It would adversely affect the New Orleans Public Defender's Office which ensures constitutionally-required representation for criminal defendants. Funding cuts could result in longer delays before and during trials.

Position/Outcome:

Citizens for 1 opposed the funding reduction and communicated this through the Senate Finance Committee. Working in coordination with the Orleans Parish Public Defender's Office, Citizens for 1 submitted written testimony to the Finance Committee. The Governor's original budget allotted \$36 million for the state public defenders. The budget passed by the House cut that number to \$30 million. The budget passed by the Senate and signed by the Governor brought that number to \$33 million, meaning that efforts of Citizens for 1 and others returned around \$3 million to the budget for public defenders.

Legislation:

HB 664, sponsored by Rep. Walt Leger, proposed the repeal of a law requiring that a violent criminal or drug dealer who jumped bail could not be issued a new bail, but rather was required to go to jail unless there were specified mitigating circumstances. Under the proposed HB 664, the original bail could be reissued innumerable times.

Position/Outcome:

Citizens for 1 opposed the proposed law and testified in the House Administration of Criminal Justice Committee. The bill died on the House floor.

Legislation:

HB 940, sponsored by Rep. Jack Montoucet, provides that a criminal defendant, except in capital cases, could waive trial by jury, opting for trial by judge no later than 45 days prior to trial date.

Position/Outcome:

Citizens for 1 supported this bill, testifying to express the belief that the rights of the victims of crime were not being given due weight. The bill passed and became Act 1053. While it didn't pass as authored, the compromise bill (Act 1053) that did pass reflects an improvement over existing practices, and is to be voted on as a constitutional amendment by the public on November 2, 2010. Citizens supports the amendment.

EDUCATION

Legislation:

SB 584, sponsored by Rep. Walt Leger and Sen. Karen Carter Peterson, provides for Statewide Facilities Authority within the executive branch of the Department of Education to provide coordination, assistance and oversight for the repair, renovation and construction of public school facilities throughout the state.

Position/Outcome:

Citizens for 1 supported this bill, which passed both houses, but was vetoed by Governor Jindal.

Legislation:

HB 420, sponsored by Rep. Walt Leger, is legislation relating to most charter schools, requiring the formula adopted by BESE and the Legislature which determines the per pupil allocation for all public elementary and secondary schools be calculated based on the former year's revenues. It also requires charter schools in district facilities to pay the bond debt associated with the facility.

Position/Outcome:

Citizens for 1 supported this bill. It passed through both houses and was signed into law by the Governor as Act 370.

Legislation:

HB 658/SB 694, sponsored by Rep. Harold Ritchie and Sen. Butch Gautreaux proposed that membership in the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana (TRSL) be mandatory for teachers in charter schools.

Position/Outcome:

Citizens for 1 opposed this bill and testified against it. The bill failed to pass through the Senate Retirement Committee.

Legislation:

HB 729, sponsored by Rep. Thomas Carmody, provides a methodical process for the selling of surplus school board property on a state-wide basis. The process previously in play did not allow for circumstances where asking prices were not met.

Position/Outcome:

Citizens for 1 supported this bill, which passed successfully through both houses and was signed into law by the Governor as Act 526.

Legislation:

HB 950, sponsored by REP. Walt Leger, allows the Recovery School District (RSD) to borrow necessary money to fund budgeted expenditures during fiscal year 2010.

Position/Outcome:

Citizens for 1 supported this bill. Working with the Division of Administration, Representative Leger with Senator Ed Murray ensured that the necessary tools to find additional resources available to the RSD schools would be in place, thus eliminating the need for this bill.

Legislation:

HB 1093, sponsored by REP. Jim Fannin, required that the Recovery School District not only receive approval from the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), which it currently has to do, but also from the Joint Legislative Committee on Budget for capital expenses including design, construction and change-orders in excess of \$100,000 .

Position/Outcome:

Citizens for 1 opposed this bill and testified against it. The bill was modified to pertain only to change-orders in excess of \$100,000 and signed into law by the Governor as Act 735.

Legislation:

SB 74, sponsored by Sen. J.P. Morrell, mandated the creation of a seven-member community advisory board for every school in the Recovery School District.

Position/Outcome:

Citizens for 1 opposed this bill, which failed to pass.

Legislation:

SB 274, sponsored by Sen. David Heitmeier, permits charter schools teachers previously enrolled in the TRSL may continue active membership in that retirement system throughout their employment at the charter school. This bill will require approval from the IRS.

Position/Outcome:

Citizens for 1 supported this bill which was signed into law by the Governor, pending IRS approval, as Act 999.

Legislation:

SB 492, sponsored by Sen. Ben Nevers, brings the governing boards of charter schools under the financial disclosure requirements of the Ethics Code. As introduced this bill would have required each member of a charter school board to file a Tier 2.1 financial disclosure report.

Position/Outcome:

Citizens for 1 opposed this bill, and testified against it. A compromise was reached in committee amending the requirement to a Tier 3 financial disclosure and signed into law by the Governor as Act 786.