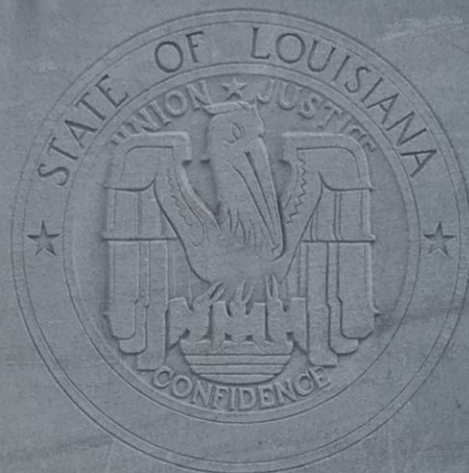


POLICY PRIORITIES

Adopted by the Executive Board December 12, 2025
at Alexandria, Louisiana

WE LIVE FOR THOSE WE LOVE



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POLICE JURY ASSOCIATION
OF LOUISIANA, INC.

2026



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1. Preserve Local Authority in Planning and Zoning Decisions

State efforts to impose uniform mandates or retaliate legislatively or judicially risk undermining the authority of local governments and weakening the effectiveness of parish governance. Louisiana’s parishes differ widely in population—ranging from fewer than 5,000 residents to more than 440,000—as well as in geography, from coastal waterways and farmland to interstates and swamplands, with some bordering other states. These variations require flexibility, not one-size-fits-all control. Article 6, Section 17 of our Constitution guarantees this local autonomy.

Local officials are best positioned to address the specific needs of their communities. The role of the state should be to establish a broad policy framework that enables local adaptation, rather than to dictate uniform solutions. Overreaching policies erode public trust and reduce the ability of both state and local governments to govern effectively.

The Louisiana Supreme Court has cautioned against “legislating a judicial solution” where the law is either clear or silent. Yet this has occurred in the past: conflicting or ambiguous statutes have led judges to effectively create law through their rulings, an impermissible practice in Louisiana. What is needed is not piecemeal exceptions for particular jurisdictions, but comprehensive clarification and reform of existing statutes. The solution is straightforward: fix what is broken, and provide clear, consistent laws that respect local authority.

2. Ensure Local Flexibility in Public Works Projects Amid Market Fluctuations

Federal tariffs on construction materials—particularly steel and aluminum—have driven up costs for public works projects across the nation. With no certainty about future tariffs or countermeasures, contractors are increasing bids or pulling back altogether, leaving parishes to grapple with volatile markets under rigid procurement rules.

Louisiana’s Public Bid Law requires public entities to award contracts to the lowest responsible bidder based on pre-bid estimates. But when material costs surge after bids are submitted, parishes are left with few options: face bid protests, delay projects, or rebid at higher prices. This system, designed to safeguard taxpayer dollars, now undermines them by locking local governments into outdated estimates that do not reflect economic reality.

The consequences are significant. Parishes are forced to scale back infrastructure projects, defer critical maintenance, or stretch already thin budgets even further. The result is a slower, more expensive, and less efficient delivery of the infrastructure that residents rely upon. Local governments need tools—not obstacles—to respond to these market conditions. Granting parishes greater flexibility in procurement practices is essential. Practical solutions include:



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- **Allowing limited cost-adjustment clauses** in contracts to account for sudden material price increases.
- **Revisiting rebid thresholds** so projects are not derailed when market swings occur after bid submission.
- **Providing temporary legislative relief** during periods of extraordinary price volatility.

Without these reforms, parish governments will continue to face unnecessary delays and wasted resources, all while communities wait for roads, bridges, and water systems that should already be under construction.

Please empower local governing authorities with the flexibility they need to manage unpredictable market conditions and deliver public works efficiently. By doing so, the state can protect taxpayer investment, support local decision-making, and ensure that critical infrastructure keeps pace with Louisiana's needs.

3. Local Involvement in Development of Carbon Capture and Sequestration Policy

As Louisiana considers carbon capture and sequestration (CCS), the state must act now to provide clear guidance. Waiting years for solar farm regulation created gaps that still exist, and the same mistake cannot be repeated. Parish governing bodies must be central to shaping CCS policies. Past experience shows that when local input is excluded, communities face unintended and uneven impacts. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency stresses that CCS projects demand coordination across all levels of government, and Louisiana's diversity makes this especially true. With parishes ranging from fewer than 5,000 residents to more than 440,000, and landscapes that include waterways, farmland, swamps, and interstates, a one-size-fits-all, top-down approach will not work.

The Carbon Capture Coalition highlights that public trust and community buy-in are critical to success. That requires early and ongoing collaboration among legislators, industry, and parish governments. Such an approach should anticipate environmental, health, and economic impacts while tailoring implementation to local needs.

By involving local authorities from the start, Louisiana can avoid repeating past regulatory missteps and ensure that CCS deployment strengthens both environmental goals and community well-being.



4. Prioritize Local Collaboration in Tax Legislation

Over the past two years, Louisiana has enacted significant tax reforms, including reductions in personal and corporate income taxes, increases in state sales tax rates, and expansions of the sales tax base to encompass digital goods and services. While these measures aim to enhance the state's economic competitiveness, they have substantial implications for local governments' fiscal stability. For instance, the expansion of the sales tax base and the repeal of certain exemptions may lead to decreased revenue for Parishes that rely heavily on these taxes to fund essential services. Additionally, changes to the inventory ad valorem tax could disproportionately affect parishes with significant industrial activity, potentially reducing their property tax revenues.

Given the diverse economic landscapes and revenue structures across Louisiana's parishes, a uniform approach to tax legislation can result in unintended consequences that strain local budgets. Therefore, it is imperative that the state engages in meaningful collaboration with local governing bodies before enacting tax legislation. This collaborative approach would allow for comprehensive assessments of potential fiscal impacts on local governments, ensuring that reforms support both state and local fiscal health.

By fostering open communication and joint analysis, the State can develop tax policies that are equitable, sustainable, and responsive to the unique needs of each parish. Such an approach not only upholds the principles of good governance but also strengthens the partnership between state and local entities, ultimately benefiting all Louisiana residents.

5. Safeguarding Local Fiscal Authority and Stability

The Police Jury Association urges that any proposed legislation—or any amendment to proposed legislation—that may reduce, or has the potential to reduce, Parish revenues, including sales or property tax proceeds or other sources of local income, **not be finalized or acted upon without a minimum forty-eight-hour delay.**

This delay is essential to ensure that Parishes have sufficient time to review, understand, and assess potential unintended consequences, particularly those that could diminish local fiscal control or decision-making authority. Sudden or last-minute changes that impact local revenue streams can have serious and lasting effects on the financial stability and long-term planning of parish governments and municipalities.

6. Fiscal Responsibility for the State's Criminal Justice System and Judiciary

Louisiana's system of mandated expenses places parish governments in an untenable position—required to fund the state's criminal justice system and the state's judiciary without adequate revenue authority. During fiscal crises, parishes have faced insolvency, cutting vital services while



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still being compelled to finance judges, prosecutors, and jails. Particularly troubling is when courts, faced with funding shortfalls, “legislate a judicial solution” to secure resources for themselves. This undermines separation of powers and erodes public trust.

The judiciary, as a co-equal branch of government, must be funded directly by the state, not through mandates imposed on local governments. Broader criminal justice costs, including district attorneys, indigent defense, and housing of state prisoners, must also be borne by the state. The 1991 constitutional amendment prohibiting unfunded mandates is insufficient in that it was prospective only. Another constitutional amendment, coupled with standardized funding of judicial and criminal justice functions, is essential. Only by shifting these obligations to the state can parish governments restore fiscal stability and focus on infrastructure and essential local services.