



Bobby Jindal
GOVERNOR



ETHICS REFORM:
ENDING CORRUPTION

Fresh Start
FOR *Louisiana*

Dear Louisianians,

We must make Louisiana a national model for government ethics laws and enforcement.

For too long, our state has had the reputation of being a place where who you know is more important than what you know. This negative perception has continuously prevented our state from attracting the type of business investment that will truly help move Louisiana forward.

Unfortunately, headlines after the 2005 hurricane season and the flow of funding from federal sources for the recovery process only served to reinforce this negative perception of a state lacking in dependable leadership, a government overrun by cronyism, and a society that has turned a blind eye to corruption in government for far too long.

The time to change that type of behavior is long overdue.

We must demand an honest government that puts the residents of our state first and the special interests last. It is time we break free from the lingering legacy of the past and fully embrace a government that is ethical, efficient, and accountable from top to bottom.

An LSU survey of out-of-state national business leaders placed cleaning up the state's reputation at the top of the list of things we can do to attract more jobs. It is time that we face the fact that failure to improve our state's unethical image keeps away high wage jobs and millions of dollars in business investments each year. There is no excuse for Louisiana to be ranked the 49th best place for doing business.

If we want to change our reputation, we have to make aggressive reforms to truly clean up our state government. We must reject the practices of the past and embrace a new Louisiana that has strong enforcement of a loophole-free ethics code that is second to none.

In this booklet, I will outline my detailed plan for substantive ethics reform: I will not rest until this vision becomes a reality.

Immediately after taking office, I will call a special legislative session for the sole purpose of considering comprehensive ethics and government reform legislation, sending a clear signal to officials and business leaders across the country that Louisiana is serious when we say we are open for business.

By making these common-sense reforms, we can make our state the standard-bearer for ethics, transparency, and government accountability.



As a state, Louisiana has consistently ranked among the lowest in studies of government integrity and ethics:

- 44th overall according to the Center for Public Integrity
- 46th overall in the Better Government Association's Integrity Index
- 3rd most corrupt state in the country in the 2004 Corporate Crime Reporter study
- 49th best place for doing business according to Forbes

WHERE LOUISIANA STANDS IN NATIONAL RANKINGS:

Topic	Grade
Legislator Personal Financial Disclosure	F
Lobbyist Spending Disclosure	F
Utility Commissioner Personal Financial Disclosure	F

(Source: Center for Public Integrity Disclosure Report Cards)

Louisiana's long history of corruption and scandal has taken its toll on our economy and threatened our future

Louisiana lags behind other states in disclosure requirements.

In fact, 43 states have stronger Legislator personal financial disclosure laws than Louisiana.

Experts consistently report that a state's reputation is an important consideration when evaluating areas for new business investment.

Many businesses have been reluctant to make critical investments in Louisiana due in part to our state's long and colorful history of governmental corruption.

Louisianians are calling for change.

This year the Legislature not only failed to pass meaningful ethics reform, but they even played games with the system. They passed a law requiring ethics training... but did not appropriate funds for it.

BUSINESS LEADERS SAY THAT CLEANING UP OUR IMAGE IS AMONG THE TOP THINGS WE CAN DO TO ATTRACT BUSINESS INVESTMENT

Top choices of respondents for "What can Louisiana do to attract business?"

Improve public schools	\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$
CLEAN UP IMAGE/CORRUPTION	\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$
Cut taxes	\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$
Market considerations	\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$
Workforce productivity & skill	\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$
Promote Louisiana	\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$
Legal reform	\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$
Cut red tape	\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$
Improve roads / Infrastructure	\$\$\$\$\$\$\$
Business climate	\$\$\$\$\$
Public safety	\$\$\$\$
Tolerance / Progressive	\$\$\$

These results were part of a national survey of 945 out-of-state business leaders conducted by the LSU Public Policy Research Lab in 2004-05.

(Source: LSU Public Policy Research Lab: Business Image Survey)

PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR ETHICS REFORM IS STRONG AND BROAD BASED

Very Important Not important
Somewhat Important Do not know / will not say

OVERALL	OVERALL	87	8
POLITICAL PARTY	REPUBLICAN	94	5
	DEMOCRAT	85	10
AREA	N.O. METRO	92	5
	FLORIDA / RIVER PARISHES	90	8
	ACADIANA / SOUTHWEST	86	10
	NORTH LOUISIANA	83	10

* Survey responses of 600 likely Louisiana voters from March 29 - April 11, 2007 to the following question: "Do you think it is very important, somewhat important, or not important for Louisiana to improve its standing in national rankings of governmental ethics laws from the bottom five to the top five states in the country?"

(Source: Public Opinion Survey by Southern Media & Opinion Research)

PUBLIC OFFICIAL CONVICTIONS PER CAPITA

MOST CONVICTIONS		FEWEST CONVICTIONS	
State	Convictions per 100,000 pop	State	Convictions per 100,000 pop
Mississippi	9.19	Nebraska	.79
Louisiana	8.95	Oregon	.99
North Dakota	8.27	New Hampshire	1.30
Montana	7.41	Utah	1.52
Alaska	6.97	Minnesota	1.59
Illinois	6.88	Iowa	1.65
Florida	6.62	Wisconsin	1.91
South Dakota	6.62	Arizona	1.98
New York	6.04	Arkansas	1.99
Ohio	5.88	Kansas	2.01

(Source: Harvard Conviction Rate Study, October 2004)

Five Pillars of the Jindal Ethics Reform Plan:



1 PILLAR ONE: You cannot be a lobbyist and a Legislator.

This will extend to other business relationships that may be seen as gray areas. This must be black and white. You cannot work for a lobbying firm, even as a consultant, and be a Legislator. You cannot receive money from a lobbying outfit and be a Legislator.

2 PILLAR TWO: Legislators will have to give full financial disclosure.

Full disclosure will include income, assets, and debts. There will be no exceptions and no loopholes. Some will complain and say they will not serve under these rules. Please do not let the door hit you on the way out. There is no doubt that many will see this as an invasion of their privacy, but it is necessary.

3 PILLAR THREE: You cannot serve in the government and do business with the government at the same time.

You can serve in the government, or you can make money from the government, but you cannot do both. This will apply to businesses owned or partially-owned by Legislators and their family members. There are many instances where lawmakers may own companies that provide a legitimate service to the government, but there have also been too many instances otherwise as well.

4 PILLAR FOUR: Shine the light of day on lobbying.

Lobby disclosure will be more detailed and more rigorous.

5 PILLAR FIVE: Do not do the crime if you cannot do the time.

Breaking the rules will result in expulsion and criminal proceedings.

“This reform will cause howls of protest, I am certain. People will say that it unfairly prohibits some fine business owners from serving in the Legislature. My response is this – no it does not. They can choose. If they want to serve, they can sell their business. If they want to make money in business with our state government, they can do that. They just will not be allowed to do both.”



STEP ONE: Call for a Special Session of the Legislature

- Upon being sworn in, Bobby Jindal will call for a special session to pass comprehensive ethics reform, sending a message to the nation, and to those who have been feeding at the trough, that Louisiana means business.

STEP TWO: Aggressively Address Potential Conflicts of Interest

- Require all Legislators and statewide-elected officials to disclose their sources of income, assets, and liabilities.
This type of disclosure is common practice in other states and Congress. The public has a right to know the financial motivations of their elected officials.
- Prohibit elected officials from lobbying, consulting, or representing clients before state agencies.
Any action taken by an elected official should be solely with the best interests of the people at heart. Divided loyalties cannot be tolerated.
- Prohibit contracts between businesses in which Legislators have a financial interest and state government.
Legislators should not be able to profit from their position, especially at the expense of other businesses in the state.
- Prohibit contracts between businesses in which Legislators have a financial interest and federal government entities doing work in Louisiana.
Legislators should not be allowed to profit from government contracts in Louisiana, such as those assisting with recovery efforts.
- Prohibit candidates for elected office from using campaign dollars to pay family members.
Just as candidates are not allowed to personally profit from campaign contributions, neither should they be allowed to put their family members on the payroll.
- Prohibit family members from lobbying any elected official to which they are related.
Allowing a family member to charge someone for access to a related Legislator is a clear conflict of interest.
- Force comprehensive public disclosure of business relationships between elected officials and lobbyists.
The public has a right to know the specifics of any instance where a Legislator's profession crosses paths with lobbyists.
- Make it more difficult for the Legislature to pass exceptions to the ethics code by requiring a supermajority vote.
Avoid any inappropriate exception to the ethics code that would simply put loopholes for special interests into place.
- Undertake a comprehensive review of the 100+ existing exceptions, eliminating those that reduce the effectiveness or enforceability of the code.
We must eliminate any exception currently on the books that does not serve the best interests of the public.



The Jindal Action Plan for Ethics Reform:



- Oppose any effort to roll back reforms to create an independent, full-time ethics administrator.
The recent change in law to restrict the ethics administrator's ability to represent clients must be upheld and enforced without exception.

STEP THREE: Make State and Local Government More Open and Accountable to the Public

- Require comprehensive lobbyist disclosures so the public knows exactly who is hired, for what specific reason, under what contractual provisions, and at what cost.
Current lobbyist disclosure laws must be improved so that the public knows all details of the subject matter and specific legislation being lobbied.
- Increase the frequency of reporting for lobbyists, especially during the legislative session.
Louisiana should increase the current requirement of annual public registration and semi-annual disclosure of expenditures for lobbyists.
- Increase penalties for fraudulent or incomplete reports and registrations.
Strong penalties should be automatically incurred in any instance of deceptive reporting by lobbyists.
- Require lobbyist filings to be electronic and posted on-line.
All lobbying reports and disclosures should be filed electronically so the public can easily search and access the details of who influences the Legislature.
- Ban contingency fee contracts – known as 'win bonuses' - for lobbyists.
Any contract that encourages a lobbyist to "win by any means necessary" invites unethical conduct and can lead to lobbyists essentially getting a cut of public monies.
- Provide citizens on-line, easy-to-understand access to all sectors of state government.
We should upgrade Louisiana's sunshine laws to improve access to public records and meetings by expanding Internet-based access to filings, reports, and announcements in all departments.
- Make all ethics filings immediately available on the Internet.
Citizens should be able to immediately access and search all information pertaining to an ethics filing or disclosure report upon its filing.
- Provide for a quick, free administrative appeals process to solve disputes over access to public records.
Any citizen denied a request for public information should be allowed to pursue a simplified administrative appeal rather than being forced to pursue a costly and time-consuming court proceeding.
- Improve the governmental ethics training program for all state employees and require passage of a test on ethics laws before any new employee starts a job or receives a paycheck. Mandatory training should be Internet-based and repeated annually so that laws are understood and followed.
Before getting paid with taxpayer dollars, all state employees must be fully aware of the law and the punishment that will follow for any infraction.

- Hold all officials and employees at all levels of government accountable for their actions.
We can no longer tolerate any level of kickback, indifference, or conflict of interest by any state employee.
- Work with local governments to implement strong ethics policies and transparent government operations.
As we rid corruption from state government, we cannot allow it to simply prey on local governments instead.
- Ensure cabinet secretaries, all appointed officials, and staff are unquestionably ethical, exceptionally talented, and committed to the responsibility of public service.
I will have a high standard for performance and a zero-tolerance for ethical lapses by my administrative appointments.

STEP FOUR: Demand Consistent, Independent Enforcement of State Ethics Laws

- Ensure that criminal charges are brought against any willful or fraudulent violation of the ethics code.
Any person who intentionally violates the ethics code should be punished for breaking the public's trust.
- Better publicize whistleblower protection laws to all public employees and increase penalties for those that violate these protections.
No threat against an employee reporting wrongdoing will be tolerated.
- Suspend from duties any state worker indicted for betraying the public's trust pending resolution of the matter.
State employees charged with using their position for personal gain should be relieved of their duties until the matter is resolved.
- Prohibit members of the Legislature and all staff from serving or sitting on a standing committee if indicted.
Legislators or staff charged with breaking the law should focus all of their time on the criminal proceedings.
- Implement mandatory ethics training programs, for elected and appointed officials, as well as members of the public boards and commissions.
Just like state employees, all other officials must be made fully aware of their duty to serve legally and ethically.
- Ensure that all state employees and officials understand that ignorance of the ethics code and its provisions is never a valid excuse for noncompliance.
Any public servant unaware of the ethics code does so at their own peril.
- Maintain the independence of the Board of Ethics.
Any effort by the Legislature to self-enforce the ethics code should be resisted at all costs.
- Ensure that the Ethics Administration has the appropriate staff and resources to enforce the code.
We must give the Ethics Administration the tools they need to improve technology, expand training programs, and vigilantly enforce the code without exception.

Paid for by Friends of Bobby Jindal.



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