

2026 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 59

BY REPRESENTATIVES MARCELLE, BAYHAM, BILLINGS, EGAN, FREEMAN,
FREIBERG, KNOX, LAFLEUR, LYONS, MURRAY, TAYLOR, WALTERS,
WRIGHT, AND YOUNG

INDIGENT DEFENSE: Provides relative to the funding of the office of the district public
defender in the 19th Judicial District Court

1 AN ACT

2 To enact R.S. 15:161.1, relative to the funding of the district public defender in the 19th
3 Judicial District Court; to provide for funding of the office personnel; to provide for
4 funding of the expenses of the office; to provide for allocation of responsibility for
5 funding the office personnel and expenses of the office; and to provide for related
6 matters.

7 Notice of intention to introduce this Act has been published
8 as provided by Article III, Section 13 of the Constitution of
9 Louisiana.

10 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

11 Section 1. R.S. 15:161.1 is hereby enacted to read as follows:

12 §161.1. District public defender; 19th Judicial District Court; East Baton Rouge
13 Parish

14 A. In addition to any funding provided by the office of the state public
15 defender, the office of the district public defender for the 19th Judicial District Court,
16 East Baton Rouge Parish shall be entitled to an expense allowance for the salaries of
17 the public defenders, stenographers, clerks, and secretaries, and salaries for special
18 officers, investigators, and other employees, and an expense allowance for stationery
19 forms, telephone, transportation, travel, postage, hotel, and other expenses incurred
20 in the discharge of their official duties.

1 B.(1) The governing authority of the parish of East Baton Rouge is hereby
2 authorized to pay a sum of not less than one million dollars from its general fund for
3 any of the items of expense, as provided by this Section, incurred by the district
4 public defender when acting in his official capacity.

5 (2) This Subsection terminates on July 1, 2028.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HB 59 Reengrossed

2026 Regular Session

Marcelle

Abstract: Provides for the funding of the district public defender in the 19th Judicial District Court.

Proposed law provides that, in addition to any funding provided by the office of the state public defender, the district public defender's office for the 19th JDC is entitled to an expense allowance for the salaries of certain staff and employees and an expense allowance for certain expenses incurred in the discharge of their official duties.

Proposed law authorizes East Baton Rouge Parish to pay a sum of not less than \$1,000,000 from its general fund for any of the items of expense incurred by the district public defender when acting in his official capacity.

Proposed law relative to the authorized payments from East Baton Rouge Parish's general fund for district public defender expenses terminates on July 1, 2028.

(Adds R.S. 15:161.1)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The House Floor Amendments to the engrossed bill:

1. Authorize East Baton Rouge Parish to pay a sum of not less than \$1,000,000 from its general fund for any expenses incurred by the district public defender when acting in his official capacity.
2. Remove proposed law that requires the expenses of the district public defender to be borne proportionately by the parish and each city, as determined by the respective governing authorities.
3. Provide that the authorized payments from East Baton Rouge Parish's general fund for district public defender expenses terminates on July 1, 2028.
4. Make technical changes.