



Annual Report 2023

Council for A Better Louisiana – Mission & Work

CABL is a nonprofit, nonpartisan statewide organization working on issues in the public interest. It does this by raising citizen awareness, advancing sound public policies, holding government accountable, and fostering civic leadership. It was founded in 1962 with the mission of improving the quality of life for all citizens of Louisiana.

In striving to fulfill its mission, CABL actively works to:

- Support effective reforms in public education including continued expansion of charter schools, school choice, school accountability, early childhood education, college and career opportunities in high school, and other innovative approaches to improve public education.
- Support postsecondary education and promote policies that will increase education attainment, close equity gaps, provide all students access to access to college and workforce training, and enhance the roles universities play in building economic prosperity in Louisiana.
- Advocate policies for state budgeting based on strategic priorities that improve the wellbeing of the state.
- Promote leadership development through the Leadership Louisiana program which seeks to build the capacity of current and emerging leaders to effectively address issues critical to Louisiana's future.
- Educate and inform citizens about important state issues and provide easy-to-understand issues information through the CABL website and other communications.

Select Activities in 2023

In early 2019, CABL embarked on a major non-partisan election initiative with the Public Affairs Research Council and the Committee of 100 for Economic Development called RESET Louisiana's Future. Its goal was to promote issues that the organizations believe are key to moving Louisiana forward. These issue areas include:

- State Fiscal Policies
- Education
- Infrastructure
- Public Safety

CABL continued that non-partisan work with its partners as part of the 2023 state elections with a significant amount of activity that included:

- Development of a 40-page policy booklet which includes briefings on nine specific areas within our policy framework: Taxes, State Budget, Pensions, Constitution, Early Childhood Education, K-12 Education, Postsecondary Education, Public Safety, and Infrastructure.
- A total of 55 policy recommendations covering each of the issue areas.
- Distribution of the policy booklet to all candidates for the Legislature and governor.
- Five RESET policy briefings across the state (Shreveport, Lafayette, Alexandria, Northshore, and Baton Rouge) and five webinars with more than 50 candidates for the Legislature participating.
- A RESET candidate forum in partnership with the Committee of 100 featuring the seven major candidates for governor.
- Speaking engagements with civic groups across the state.

- Significant media focus on major state issues including multiple in-depth sessions with Louisiana Public Broadcasting and public radio stations in New Orleans and Baton Rouge.
- Endorsements from 10 major economic development organizations statewide.

As part of this work, CABL took the lead role in organizing the candidate policy briefings across the state, candidate outreach, scheduling statewide speaking engagements, and soliciting endorsements from other regional organizations.

In addition to the RESET Louisiana initiative, CABL engaged in other activities to provide non-partisan issue information to voters and the public at large. These included:

- An analysis of the eight constitutional amendments on the fall ballots.
- Development of a comprehensive list of 35 indicators to help measure where Louisiana stands on matters critical to the future of the state.
- A live debate televised statewide in partnership with Louisiana Public Broadcasting featuring major candidates for governor.
- Ongoing election and issue analysis for KTBS-TV in Shreveport.

Outside of its election work, CABL also engaged in education advocacy work for the 2023 legislative session and served on key legislative commissions and task forces including:

- Teacher Recruitment, Recovery, and Retention Task Force (Co-Chair)
- Dual Enrollment Task Force
- Workforce Opportunity & Readiness Task Force
- MFP Task Force
- Louisiana Commission on Civic Education

Finally, CABL continued its work to inform citizens about key issues by releasing numerous briefings on a variety of subjects and circulating them widely through its CABLWire e-newsletter.

Leadership Louisiana

CABL began the process of returning to its normal calendar-year schedule for Leadership Louisiana after it was disrupted by the COVID pandemic. That entailed hosting seven sessions in 2023, instead of the usual six.

- January: Monroe (2022 class)
- March: Lafayette (2023 class) & Alexandria (2022 class)
- April: Houma (2023 class)
- July: New Orleans (2023 class)
- September: Shreveport (2023 class)
- November: Baton Rouge (2023 class)

In January the 2023 class will graduate with a closing session in Lake Charles and the 2024 class will hold its opening retreat in Lafayette. In October Leadership Louisiana celebrated its 35th anniversary with a special alumni dinner and fundraiser hosted by Chef John Folse. Proceeds went to the Leadership Louisiana Scholarship & Enhancement Fund. More than \$30,000 was raised for the fund.

In November 54 people were selected to participate in the 2024 Leadership Louisiana class out of almost 90 applications received. With the graduation of the 2023 class, the Leadership Louisiana alumni base will total more than 1,500 members.