

Shreveport Means Business

A Publication of the Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce



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Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce

LA GRAD ACT ACTION ALERT

The Louisiana GRAD Act (HB 1171 by House Speaker Jim Tucker R-Terrytown) is scheduled for floor action Thursday, June 3rd. The LA GRAD is a high priority for the Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce based on recommendations from the Chamber's Education Task Force led by Vice Chair of Education Dr. Phillip Rozeman. Dr. Rozeman will be at the Capitol Thursday to encourage House members to vote FOR the bill.

The LA GRAD Act will give colleges and universities greater autonomy in being able to increase their own tuition rates in exchange for meeting specific performance criteria to be measured by the Board of Regents. This will be a major step in the direction of helping higher education match the needs of graduates in helping them prepare for the workforce.

We are asking our Chamber members to contact our House of Representative members asking them to SUPPORT the LA GRAD Act (House Bill 1171). Simply click on <http://votervoice.net/groups/shreveport/advocacy/?issueid=22089> to take action through the Chamber's grassroots website www.ShreveportMeansBusiness.com

ACTION ALERT ON ATTORNEY CONTINGENCY FEES



Senate Bill 731 by Senate President Joel Chaisson (D-Destrehan) would allow the state Attorney General to hire contract attorney's on a contingency fee basis. The Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce joins many other business organizations in the state in OPPOSING this legislation.

The Attorney General's office can hire outside attorneys already, but not on a contingency fee basis. The problem with this legislation is that it would allow private attorneys who are interested in pursuing class actions to escape the Federal Class Action Reform which requires that almost all of Louisiana's future class action cases be filed in federal court, not state court. However, the federal law contains a provision which allows for an exemption if the mass action suit is filed under the auspices of an attorney general. So, that would allow a lawyer who wants to by-pass the federal courts by getting the attorney general to hire them to handle the case. But, in order to receive the usual high attorney fees, they would have to have the A.G. pay a contingency fee rather than a scheduled hourly fee.

Please join the Greater Shreveport Chamber of Commerce, LABI and numerous other business organizations in OPPOSING Senate Bill 731. Contact your senator immediately by clicking on <http://votervoice.net/groups/shreveport/advocacy/?issueid=22091> to send communication through the Chamber's grassroots website at www.ShreveportMeansBusiness.com

The state construction budget (House Bill 2 by Appropriations Committee Chairman Hunter Greene R-Baton Rouge) is awaiting floor action in the Louisiana House of Representatives. Included in the bill is the funding promised by Governor Bobby Jindal for the construction of I-49 North.

The bill in its current form contains \$7.5 million in Unclaimed Property funds; \$10.5 million in Priority 2 general obligation bond funding and \$26 million in Priority 5 general obligation bond funding. This \$44 million will allow the completion of Segment E which will connect I-49 from Louisiana Highway 1 to the Arkansas State Line.

House Bill 2 will need to pass the House; Senate committee and the full Senate.

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