



*Senate  
State of Louisiana*

P.O. Box 94183  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804  
(225) 342-2040

February 5, 2018

The Honorable John Bel Edwards  
Governor of Louisiana  
P.O. Box 94004  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

Dear Governor Edwards,

As we enter 2018, Louisiana continues to face the devastating effects of budget instability. Once again, we are forced to confront the question of whether the legislative and executive branches are actually willing to work together and address this pressing issue or not.

Governor Edwards, you have been steadfast in expressing the need for consensus to be reached on a plan to address the state's looming budget shortfall before you will issue a call for a special session to adopt and implement such plan. A firm consensus on exact solutions is always difficult to reach. However, by means of this letter we wanted to advise you that each of the undersigned agrees on the need for you to call a special session to be held in February.

There is not a single option that will be available in June that is not available to the legislature now. The state gains nothing and only loses by waiting. Waiting until June or later to solve the budget shortfall will unduly burden and cause irreparable harm to our universities and hospitals, and further harm the constituents served by them. Many students choose which college they will attend before June. Families need to know how much, if any, of the TOPS scholarship will be available to assist with tuition. Contracts must be signed with professors and course schedules must be set. If the state is unable to meet its obligations, health care providers are bound by contractual terms that could threaten reductions in service and mass layoffs in the public and private sectors prior to June. In short, the cost of delaying a special session until June or later is not worth the risk.

In our humble opinion, we the undersigned believe that the best way for this situation to be promptly addressed is for a February special session to be called by you. Both chambers can then come to Baton Rouge and have the opportunity to work together and develop a bi-partisan plan to move this great state forward. We further believe that it would be in everyone's best interest to make the call as broad as possible, in order to give the legislature the maximum latitude needed to come together with a plan.

Without the legislature having that opportunity prior to the 2018 Regular Session, many citizens of our state will be unable to adequately plan for their future. Surely Louisiana deserves better than that. We must all work together now for our state and our people. Our work now must ensure that our citizens in the future not be forced to consider whether a better life for themselves and their children necessitates residing elsewhere.

Therefore, the undersigned respectfully request that you call the legislature into a special session prior to the 2018 regular session so that we can come to Baton Rouge and work together - and with your Administration - and do the people's work.

Sincerely,

	
	
	
	
	
	
	