



# LOUISIANA SENATE

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## SENATOR LONG BEGINS WORK OF 2012 REGULAR SESSION

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### SESSION TO FOCUS ON MAJOR EDUCATION REFORMS, STATE RETIREMENT SYSTEM ISSUES & STATE SPENDING PRIORITIES

Senator Gerald Long and his colleagues in the state senate began the work of the 2012 Regular Session of the State Legislature at noon Monday, March 12, 2012. At this regular session where lawmakers may consider any matter except specific tax and revenue issues, the expected immediate focus will be on major education reforms, state retirement system issues and state spending reforms. Last week, the public education reform package proposed by Governor Jindal was debated in House and Senate committees.

"The issues we will be tackling this session are of critical importance to the people of Louisiana and the future of the state," said Senator Long (R-Natchitoches). "To reach workable solutions to these difficult and contentious problems, it's important that every side has an opportunity to express their concerns."

Beyond the education reforms, Senators will also consider proposed changes in state retirement programs impacting most state workers as well as university professors and other higher education employees. The retirement system changes are aimed at placing the system on a more sound financial footing and reducing the impact of retirement system funding needs on other state services and programs.

The state's proposed \$25.5 billion operating budget is under consideration in the House of Representatives. The Senate Finance Committee is working through an overview of the proposal with Senate Fiscal staff during the first weeks of the session.

Before the opening of the regular session, state senators pre-filed 613 bills. Members may introduce an additional five bills during the session with an April 3<sup>rd</sup> deadline for filing the additional measures. The Louisiana State Legislature must complete the work of the 2012 Regular Session no later than 6:00 p.m. Monday, June 4<sup>th</sup>.

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**-add one/session-**

**Citizens can follow the work of the 2012 Regular Session on the Internet at [www.senate.la.gov](http://www.senate.la.gov) or [www.legis.la.gov](http://www.legis.la.gov) where they can read and print bills, review committee schedules and agendas and watch legislative proceedings live or through the legislature's video archives. Live broadcasts of legislative proceedings can also be seen weekday afternoons on certain local cable stations participating in LaTV, a cooperative effort of the House, the Senate, Louisiana Public Broadcasting and the Louisiana Cable Television Association.**

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