

John Kennedy Wants to Eliminate Funding for these Programs and Activities

Statutory dedications (“stat deds”) are general fund dollars that have been dedicated by the legislature for a specific purpose.

Anyone, including John Kennedy, who says the solution to our present budget deficit is simply to use stat deds is either grossly misinformed or purposefully politically disingenuous.

Stat deds do not solve the budget problem unless the use of the stat deds is eliminated.

The treasurer originally proposed eliminating 156 special funds to “free up \$488 million cash tomorrow.”

Here’s what’s on his list:

Stat Ded	Amount	Comment
1. LAFA	\$12,000,000	Debt service approved by the Bond Commission, which Kennedy chairs.
2. Forestry Productivity Fund	\$2,000,000	Restoration of Louisiana Forest Land.
3. Telecommunications for the Deaf Fund	\$1,800,000	Assistive technology for the deaf.
4. Tobacco Tax Trust Fund	\$38,930,000	Provides funding for New Orleans Cancer Center, Tobacco Free Living, and DARE.
5. Workforce Training Rapid Response Fund	\$10,000,000	Funds high-demand workforce training program in LCTCS. In other words, job training.
6. Mega Fund	\$20,030,000	This money isn’t even available until 2017 when the high-risk pool terminates and the money is transferred to the Mega Fund.
7. Rapid Response Fund	\$10,060,000	These funds already are committed to economic development projects bringing jobs to Louisiana.
8. Video Draw Poker Purse Supplemental Fund	\$2,830,000	These funds are dedicated to the horse racing industry, and a portion is redirected for funding in Higher Education.
9. Pari-Mutuel Live Racing Facility Gaming Control Fund	\$7,840,000	This is the entire gaming enforcement budget, including State Police, the Attorney General, and the Louisiana Racing Commission.

10. Two Percent Fire Insurance Fund	\$29,030,000	Workers' Compensation Insurance for volunteer fire departments across the state.
11. Fireman Training Fund	\$4,300,000	Funds the LSU Fire Training Program
12. Department of Justice Legal Support Fund	\$10,000,000	The Attorney General's litigation fund for experts, legal counsel, and technology.
13. Attorney General Debt Collection Fund	\$2,380,000	Funds the Attorney General's efforts to collect money owed to the state.
14. Natural Resource Restoration Trust Fund	\$113,000,000	Funds the Regional Restoration Planning Program, including five major projects funded by the Restore Act.
15. Louisiana Fire Marshal Fund	\$21,600,000	Funds the operation of the State Fire Marshal.
16. Rehabilitation for the Blind and Visually Impaired	\$2,000,000	Funds the Louisiana Center for the Blind in Ruston.
17. Legislative Capital Technology Enhancement Fund	\$10,000,000	Funds improvements at the State Capitol, enhancing citizen access to government.
18. Amnesty Collections Fund	\$50,000,000	This is one-time money collected from Tax Amnesty; the funds have been dedicated to the Medicaid Program.
19. Louisiana Public Defender Fund	\$32,300,000	Funds the entire operation of the Public Defender's Office.
20. Public Oyster Seed Ground Development Account	\$2,450,000	Funds major projects to restore oyster grounds, including clutch deposition (shells, etc., laid down on oyster grounds for spat to attach).
21. Sales Tax Dedication for tourism and economic development purposes in virtually every parish	\$57,400,000	

This list totals \$411 million of the \$488 million included on the treasurer's list of funds to be eliminated. If these funds are eliminated, the programs either go away or the legislature must fund them with state general fund dollars.

It's time to be honest about the state budget instead of simply telling people what politicians think they want to hear.