

To My Supporters and Friends:

The session is moving quickly and it is hard to gauge, at this point, just how effective we are being as legislators. The budget deficit, however, is very real, \$1.3 billion, and if it wasn't for the stimulus money it would be almost \$2 billion!

My **Senate Bill 261** got through committee this week and will be up for debate on the senate floor next week. The bill *requires a critical analysis of every department of state government*. Such an analysis is very timely because the deficit is dictating a downsizing of state government and this bill gives us the mechanism to facilitate the needed change.

The House has approved the **budget (HB1)** and we will receive it in **the senate Finance Committee on Monday, the 18th of May**

. As you have probably read, the really *ugly cuts belong to Higher Education and Healthcare.*

Higher Education is being cut \$219 million and Healthcare \$440 million. Next year the cuts will be about the same, but in 2011 those cuts will actually double. I am concerned that the public is not paying attention to what is getting ready to happen and will be shocked at the results of these cuts.

Last year I was concerned about the Governor's method of dealing with the legislature. This year he is working with the legislature much more closely, and I think the state will be the ultimate beneficiary of the new coordination. It is working well. **The Governor's agenda is meshing with that of the legislature**

, and I think we will see some very positive changes for our state.

Evans Spiceland represented me at a meeting on Thursday with Parish officials and the Corps of Engineers regarding the **interchange at Hwy 1088**. Thanks go to Evans for his tireless work and dedication to making Louisiana a better state. Steve Scalise and David Vitter helped to arrange the meeting and get the players to the table. Evans feels **some progress was made and that the we can hopefully get this long delayed project under construction**

. The Corps is waiting for some data to be provided by Parish Government.

The flow of emails and phone calls to our office is incredibly large and that is one way we get the pulse of the district on the many issues that we face in Baton Rouge. Michelle Pichon is working with me in Baton Rouge every Wednesday and the Mandeville Republican Women are helping to "man" the local office on that day each week. Thank you very much.

Please let me know how I can help you...

Jack Donahue
State Senate District 11