

Louisiana

Board of Pardons & Committee on Parole
2025 Annual Report



Message from the Chairman

I am pleased to submit this Annual Report of the Louisiana Board of Pardons & Parole for Fiscal Year 2025.

The Board plays a vital role in Louisiana's criminal justice system by balancing public safety, accountability, victim participation, and rehabilitation. Every decision centers on protecting public safety through careful, individualized reviews informed by risk assessments, behavioral data, victim input, and reentry planning. Parole is never automatic and, when granted, includes supervision conditions to support accountability and reintegration.

The data continues to show that this approach works. Over a five-year tracking period, individuals released by the Committee on Parole returned to custody at approximately 23%, compared to nearly twice that rate for the total released population. This significant difference underscores the value of structured review and supervised release in reducing recidivism and improving public safety.

During Fiscal Year 2025, the Board built on this evidence by implementing a new initiative focused on individuals who are not eligible for parole consideration due to their risk assessment score but are scheduled for mandatory good-time release. While these releases occur by law, the Board now reviews available risk and needs information to determine whether targeted conditions of supervision may assist in their transition back into the community. This effort does not change eligibility for release; it is a practical step to apply proven supervision principles where they are most effective.

Victim participation remains a critical part of the Board's process. Victims are notified, given the opportunity to be heard, and treated with respect throughout parole and pardon proceedings. Their input continues to inform Board decisions and conditions of supervision.

None of this work occurs in isolation. I am grateful to my fellow Board members for their dedication to our shared mission of public safety and their commitment to thoughtful, principled decision-making. I also appreciate the strong partnership with the Department of Public Safety & Corrections, as well as the collaboration of supervision officers, institutional staff, victim advocates, treatment providers, and community stakeholders across the state whose work is essential to successful reentry and community safety.

This Annual Report is intended to provide transparency into the Board's work and the outcomes of its decisions. The results reflected here reinforce the importance of evidence-based practices, thoughtful supervision, and continued evaluation of what best promotes public safety.

Respectfully,



Sheryl Ranatza, Chairman



Sheryl Ranatza retired from the Louisiana Department of Public Safety & Corrections in 2011, after serving over 30 years in DPS&C. She held a variety of management positions throughout the Department, with her final position being that of Deputy Secretary. Ranatza was the first female in Louisiana to achieve the designation of Certified Corrections Executive by the American Correctional Association and is a member of several corrections affiliated organizations. She was appointed as Chairman of the Louisiana Board of Parole in February 2012 and Chairman of the Pardon Board in August 2012 and has continued to serve in that role through the end of 2025.

Steve Prator

Vice Chairman Pardon & Parole

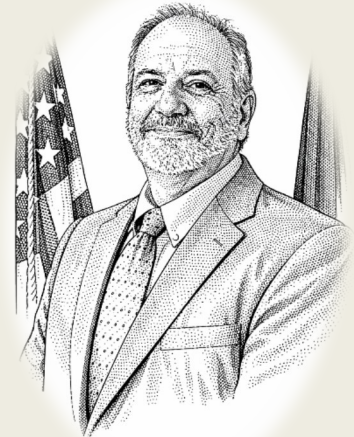
Steve Prator was with the Shreveport Police Department for 19 years, working patrol, detectives, and narcotics before being appointed chief of police, a position he held for over eight years. He was then elected Sheriff of Caddo Parish. He held that office for six terms, during which time he served on the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement and was the Chairman of the Police Officer Standards and Training Council. Mr. Prator is a graduate of LSU-Shreveport and the FBI National Executive Institute. He also is a proud member of the Louisiana Law Enforcement Hall of Fame.



Curtis "Pete" Fremin

Pardon & Parole

Curtis "Pete" Fremin is the former Director of Probation and Parole at the Department of Corrections and has 35 years of experience in Louisiana state government. In the past, he served as President of the Louisiana Probation and Parole Association, a State Representative of the Southern States Correctional Association, elected member of the Louisiana Civil Service Commission, and the Interstate Compact Commissioner for Louisiana. Mr. Fremin is also an LSU alumni and received his Bachelor of Sciences degree in 1983.



Carolyn Stapleton

Pardon & Parole

Carolyn Stapleton retired from the East Baton Rouge Sheriff's Office in 2014 with over two decades of experience in Crime Victim Assistance Services. During her tenure as the EBR Crime Victims Assistance Division director, she was awarded the National Sheriff's Association's Award for Crime Victims Services and the National Crime Victims' Rights Week Community Awareness Grant. Since her retirement, Ms. Stapleton has served in various capacities in victims' services, including a position with the 16th Judicial District Attorney. She also served on the Crime Victims Reparation Board, representing the 6th Congressional District.



Chuck Tillis

Pardon & Parole

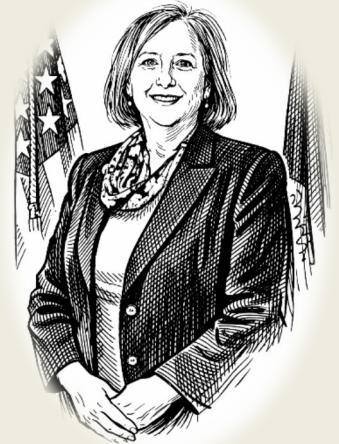
Chucky Tillis is a graduate of Southern University in Baton Rouge and served over 30 years as President of Oilfield and Plant Maintenance, Inc. For the past 15 years, he selflessly dedicated himself to prison ministry. His work serving and ministering to the inmates at Louisiana State Penitentiary reflects a deep understanding of the challenges faced by those who are incarcerated. He also has served as a director at the Louisiana Leadership Institute, shaping young minds in the Greater Baton Rouge area.



Jerrie LeDoux

Parole

Jerrie LeDoux is returning to the Committee on Parole after serving five years under a previous administration. She took advantage of multiple Association of Parole Authority International training events. During her tenure on the Board, she earned her M.S. in Communication from the University of Louisiana Lafayette, where she wrote her qualitative thesis on Stakeholder Theory in Medical Parole Reform. Recently, she has served seven years as a congressional liaison for the United States House of Representatives speaker.



Danny Barras

Parole

Daniel Barras is a former Probation and Parole Supervisor with 37 ½ years of experience in Probation and Parole. He began his career with Probation and Parole in 1986 when he was hired as a field agent and worked as a specialist and supervisor until his retirement in 2018. Previously, he served as President, Vice-President, Sergeant-at-Arms, Board Member, and Legislative Liaison of the Louisiana Probation & Parole Officers Association. Mr. Barras is also a University of Southwestern Louisiana alumni and received his Bachelor's degree in Business Management in 1983.



Our Mission

We serve the people of Louisiana by making fair decisions that protect our communities, honor victims, and help those ready to return home be successful.

Our Vision

We believe in second chances, guided by fairness, public safety, and the voices of victims.

- We work with families, communities, and partners to:
- Make just and thoughtful parole and clemency decisions;
- Support crime victims with compassion and respect;
- Help individuals safely and successfully return to their communities;
- Set clear expectations and hold people accountable;
- Keep learning and growing as a team committed to public safety.

Our Values

We value Ethics, Integrity, Equity and Innovation.

Experienced Board, Continued Commitment to Training and Evidence-Based Decision-Making

Nearly two years into their service, the current members of the Louisiana Board of Pardons & Committee on Parole have moved beyond transition and into a period of sustained professional development, institutional knowledge, and consistent application of evidence-based practices. Appointed following Governor Jeff Landry's election in November 2023, three Board of Pardons members and two Committee on Parole members now bring the benefit of hands-on experience to the critical work of reviewing clemency requests and making parole determinations that directly impact public safety, victims, and justice-involved individuals.

What Makes a Board Member

Board members are appointed in accordance with **La. R.S. 15:572.1**, which establishes stringent qualification requirements to ensure members possess the education, professional background, and practical experience necessary to make informed, balanced decisions. These statutory requirements reflect the seriousness of the Board's responsibilities and the expectation that decisions be grounded in expertise, sound judgment, and an understanding of complex criminal justice issues.

Since their appointment, members have completed extensive initial training and have continued to participate in ongoing education focused on Board policies and procedures, relevant statutory and constitutional law, victim-centered practices, and evidence-based decision-making frameworks related to discretionary release. Continued training has allowed members to refine their approach, promote consistency across hearings, and apply research-driven practices that support public safety while recognizing rehabilitation and accountability.

Stakeholder Engagement

In addition to formal training, Board members have engaged regularly with key stakeholders, including district attorneys, victim advocates, community service providers, and leadership within the Department of Public Safety & Corrections

(DPS&C). These ongoing engagements have strengthened interagency collaboration and ensured Board decisions are informed by multiple perspectives within the criminal justice system.

The Board's work reflects a matured, disciplined approach—one rooted in continued learning, evidence-based practices, and a steadfast commitment to victims, public safety, and the integrity of Louisiana's discretionary release process.

Interstate Collaboration and Training



As part of its ongoing commitment to training and evidence-based decision-making, the Board Members recently participated in a multi-state roundtable discussion with paroling authorities from Georgia and Washington. The exchange provided Louisiana Board members an opportunity to compare parole operations, structured decision-making models, and hearing practices while identifying shared strengths and areas for continued improvement. This peer-to-peer engagement reinforced the value of continuous learning, professional development, and collaboration across jurisdictions, and supports the Board's commitment to informed, consistent parole decisions that prioritize public safety, victim input, and accountability.

APAI 2025 Annual Training Conference Participation

Members of our team participated in the **Association of Paroling Authorities International (APAI) 2025 Annual Training Conference**, held May 18–21, 2025, in Atlanta, Georgia. The conference, themed “*From Evidence to Action: Innovations in Parole*,” brought together parole leaders from across the country and internationally to focus on evidence-based practices, structured decision-making, and emerging challenges facing paroling authorities

Louisiana was represented by Chairman Ranatza, Board Member Tillis, Executive Director Abbott, and Executive Management Officer Troxclair, reflecting the Board’s continued commitment to professional development at both the policy and operational levels. Chairman Ranatza and Executive Director Abbott participated in job-specific leadership and executive trainings designed to strengthen governance, statutory compliance, and the effective application of evidence-based parole practices. These sessions emphasized the unique responsibilities of board chairs and executive leadership in setting organizational vision, ensuring consistency in decision-making, and maintaining public confidence in the parole process.

In addition to leadership-focused training, Louisiana participants attended regional breakout sessions that brought together neighboring states to discuss shared challenges, legislative trends, and operational pressures affecting parole systems across the region. These discussions provided valuable opportunities to compare approaches, exchange practical solutions, and identify best practices relevant to Louisiana’s statutory framework and public safety priorities.

Overall, participation in the APAI 2025 Annual Training Conference reinforced the Board’s commitment to continuous improvement, collaboration, and data-informed decision-making. Insights gained from both executive-level trainings and regional discussions will continue to inform Louisiana’s parole practices, support consistent application of evidence-based principles, and strengthen the Board’s ability to balance public safety, victim considerations, and fairness in discretionary release decisions.



Louisiana to Host 2026 APAI Annual Training Conference

Executive Director Abbott formally submitted Louisiana’s proposal to the APAI Selection Committee to host the 2026 APAI Annual Training Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana. The submission emphasized Louisiana’s ability to support a high-quality training experience while fostering meaningful collaboration among paroling authorities facing shared public safety and policy challenges. Consideration by the APAI Selection Committee reflects Louisiana’s growing leadership role within APAI and its readiness to host a premier professional training event that advances best practices in parole decision-making. New Orleans was presented as an ideal host city, offering a centralized location, robust infrastructure, and a longstanding history of convening national and international conferences.

Importance of Accreditation

Accreditation with the **American Correctional Association (ACA)** remains a cornerstone of the Louisiana Board of Pardons & Committee on Parole’s commitment to fairness, transparency, and public trust. As staff turnover occurs, it is essential that new employees are fully integrated into the accreditation process and understand the importance of maintaining compliance with established standards that guide daily operations and decision-making. Incorporating accreditation principles into onboarding and ongoing training ensures institutional knowledge is preserved and continuous improvement remains a shared responsibility. Building on the Board’s strong history of accreditation and successful reaccreditation, we look forward to its next ACA audit in **2028**.



Understanding Reprieves, Pardons, Commutations, and Parole in a Changing Legal Landscape

Louisiana’s approach to post-conviction relief and parole has evolved significantly in recent years, reflecting legislative reforms, shifting prison demographics, and heightened public expectations around safety and accountability. Within this framework, the Governor of Louisiana retains important constitutional authority to grant reprieves, pardons, and commutations tools that allow for individualized relief in limited and carefully scrutinized circumstances.

A reprieve is a temporary pause in the execution of a sentence. It is typically used to allow additional time for review, consideration of new information, or the resolution of extraordinary circumstances. A pardon represents a formal act of forgiveness that may restore certain civil rights and is generally reserved for individuals who have demonstrated sustained rehabilitation and whose continued punishment no longer serves the interests of justice. A commutation, by contrast, reduces the length or severity of a sentence while leaving the underlying conviction intact, and is most often considered when an individual has shown long-term good conduct, personal growth, or compelling humanitarian factors.

While the Governor may issue reprieves independently, pardons with restoration of rights and sentence commutations require a formal recommendation from the Board of Pardons following a public hearing. Applicants must receive four favorable votes before their request advances to the Governor for final consideration. This multi-layered process ensures that clemency decisions are deliberate, transparent, and grounded in public safety considerations rather than exercised arbitrarily.

Process to Appear Before the Board

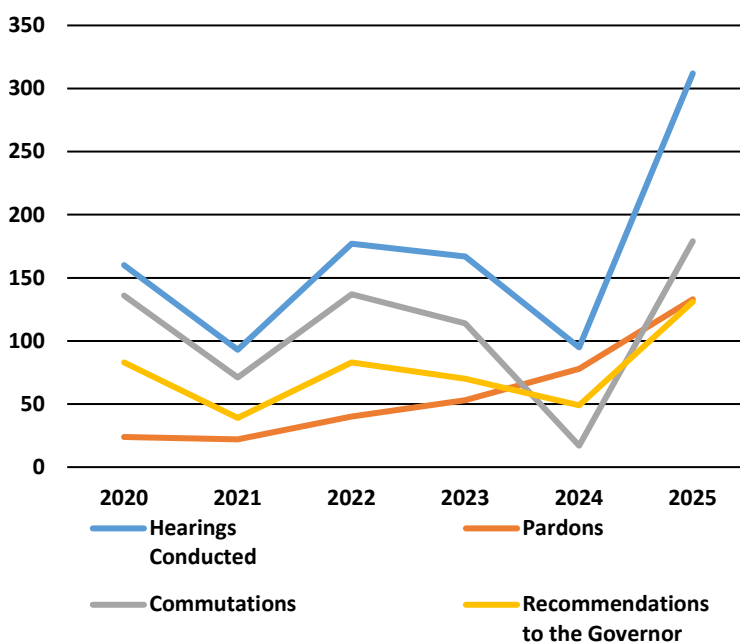
Commutation:

The commutation process begins when an incarcerated individual submits a clemency application. Applicants must provide extensive documentation, including evidence of program completion (educational, vocational, or rehabilitative), institutional disciplinary records, and a detailed reentry plan outlining housing, employment, and community support. Together, these materials allow the Board to assess progress, behavior, and readiness for a reduced sentence.

Pardon:

Individuals who have already completed their sentence may apply for a pardon by documenting their employment status, community involvement, and reasons for seeking relief. Applications typically include an explanation of personal growth, law-abiding behavior, and how the conviction continues to create barriers to full reintegration.

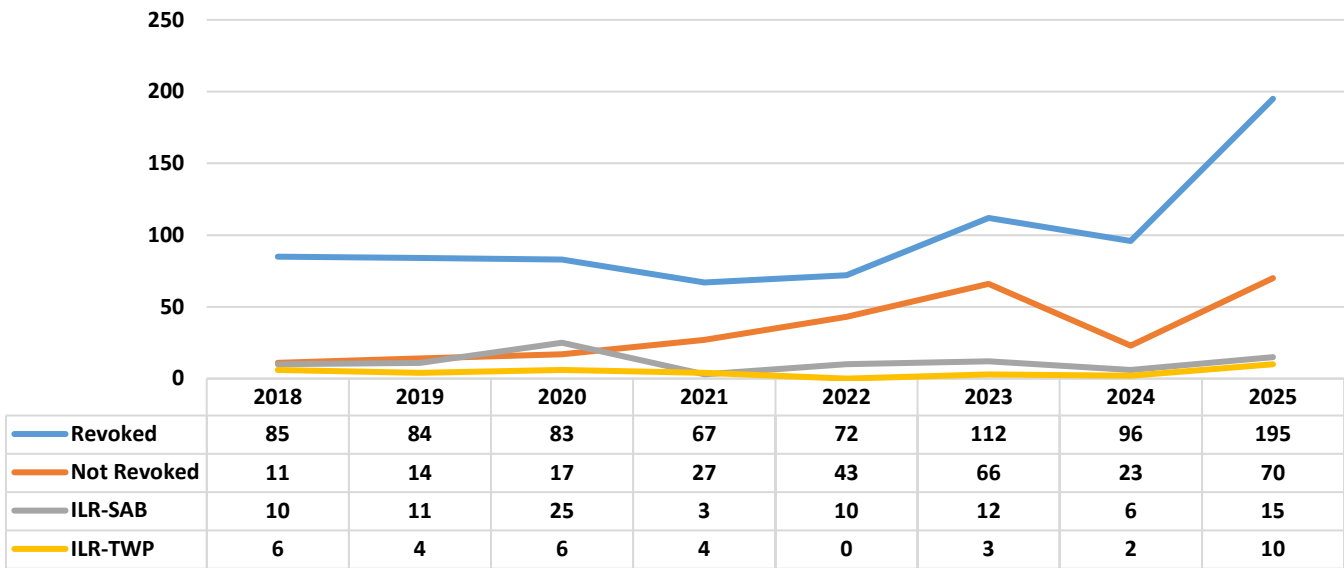
Clemency Hearings



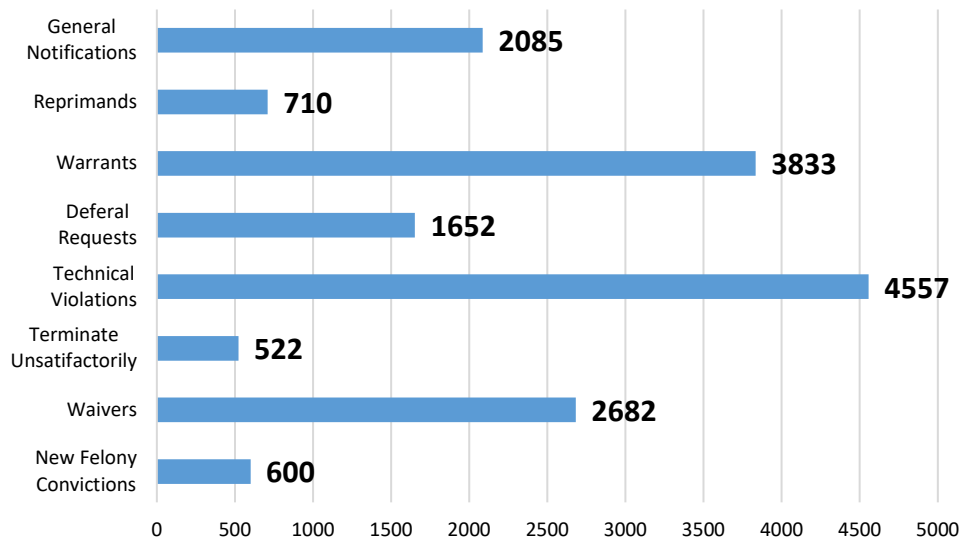
Post Release and in the Community

Individuals released from incarceration either through the discretionary decisions of the Committee on Parole or through statutorily mandated Good Time Parole Supervision (GTPS) remain under the jurisdiction of the Board and are subject to community supervision. Parole supervision involves structured oversight in the community, where individuals must comply with specific conditions such as regularly reporting to a parole officer, maintaining employment, obeying all laws, avoiding contact with victims, submitting to drug testing, and in some cases adhering to curfews or electronic monitoring. The Committee on Parole also takes daily action to modify these conditions based on recommendations from parole officers to better address risk, behavior, or changing circumstances. While parole supervision reflects discretionary release decisions made by the Committee, GTPS represents mandatory release based on sentence reduction statutes, though both require compliance with supervision conditions to support successful reintegration and protect public safety.

Revocation Hearing Outcomes



Actions by the Board



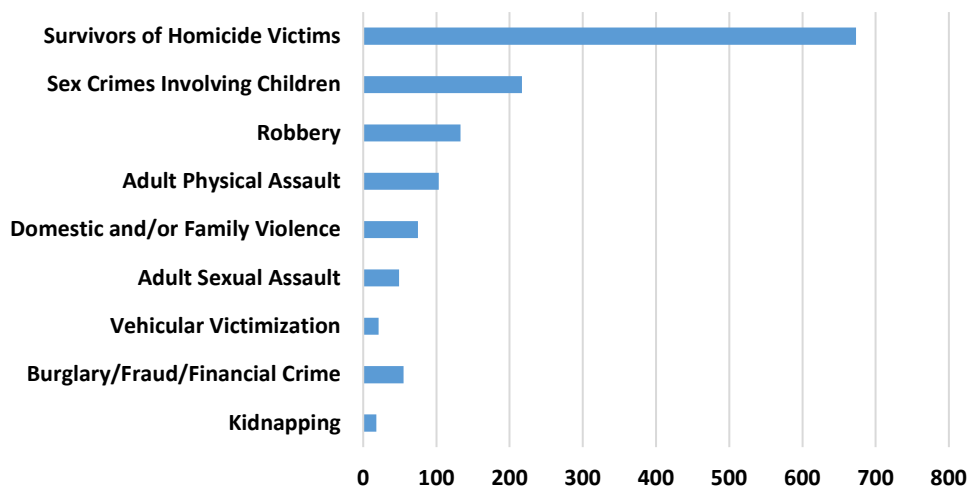
Providing for Victims: Education, Connection and Healing

Since its implementation in April 2020, the Victim Assistance Program continues to handle notification and secure victim impact statements for upcoming pardon and parole hearings in a trauma informed manner. This work allows Probation and Parole additional time to focus on inmate supervision. Victim Assistance Coordinators have also focused on registering new victims of crime with the DPS&C and ensuring that contact information for those already registered remains current.

In 2025, the program expanded its scope to include all offenses, not just those related to sex offenses or crimes of violence. The program also began contacting victims of new offenses related to the possible revocation of parole, with the priority being victims of domestic abuse battery. Services provided to these victims includes assistance with securing protective orders, mental health treatment services, etc.

The program currently operates with eight Victim Assistance Coordinators and one Program Administrator. Victim Assistance Coordinators are assigned to work with each Probation and Parole District Office (with some overlap). The chart below identifies the victimization categories that is used when working with victims and survivors. In calendar year 2025 we provided services to 1,450 victims and survivors, up 15% from 2024.

Victims By Crime Type



Looking to the Future:

We plan to expand the responsibilities of the VACs to include interviewing victims for pre-sentence investigations. This expansion will ensure that victims continue to play a critical role in the criminal justice process, contributing to more informed decisions that prioritize public safety while addressing the needs and concerns of victims throughout Louisiana.

Victim Offender Dialogue

Victim Offender Dialogue (VOD) in Louisiana is a restorative justice program that allows victims of crime and inmates to meet in a safe and controlled environment within the prison or while the inmate is on supervision. VOD provides victims with an opportunity to express their feelings to the inmate regarding the effects the crime has had on their lives. The process also may allow inmates to take responsibility for their actions and make amends.

Volunteer facilitators prepare both the victim and the inmate for a face-to-face meeting. This preparation consists of multiple meetings with both the victim and the inmates statewide. The VOD program handled 17 cases during 2025, with 12 cases being successfully completed.

Victim Accountability Letter Program

This course, facilitated by the Reentry Departments of Louisiana at both state and local institutions, offers a unique opportunity for inmates to take ownership of their actions. Through the use of an accountability letter, inmates can demonstrate their understanding of the harm caused by their crime and acknowledge their responsibility for it. Additionally, participation in the class provides inmates with a deeper understanding of the impact their crime has on victims and survivors, fostering a sense of empathy and accountability.

Victim Impact: *Listen and Learn Curriculum*

Victim Impact: Listen and Learn is a structured initiative designed to elevate the inmate population's understanding of their actions and the lasting effects of crime. We continued to expand the footprint of Victim Impact by conducting a training session at the Raymond Laborde Correctional Center for 26 staff members from across the state, representing various institutions, and resulted in the issuance of certificates to all participants.

2025 An Eventful Year

The Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women ribbon cutting marked a milestone in the state's commitment to modernizing correctional facilities and improving conditions for incarcerated women. The facility was built in response to the flood of August 2016, when historic rainfall inundated much of south Louisiana and severely impacted the original institution. This ceremony not only celebrated the opening of a safer, more resilient facility, but also reflected Louisiana's continued investment in rehabilitation and public safety, following one of the state's most significant natural disasters.



Chairman Rantaza, P&P Director Acosta, Board Member Barras, and LCIW Warden Thomas

Board staff visited Franklin Parish Detention Center, and received a comprehensive tour of the facility, highlighting their education and vocational training programs as well as the housing units. Their commitment to equipping individuals with practical skills and supporting successful reentry was evident, reflecting a strong focus on rehabilitation and preparing individuals for a productive return to the community.



Executive Director Abbott, Dramian Crockett, DOC Transitional Specialist Crockett, Chief Administrative Deputy Rigdon, and Education Director Sparks

Live Hearings

The Board conducts live hearings at universities as part of an effort to engage and educate the next generation of criminal justice professionals. Following these hearings, Board Members and parole officers participate in structured debrief sessions with students, offering insight into the cases presented and the factors considered in decision-making. This hands-on approach fosters transparency and understanding by allowing students to ask questions and gain a deeper appreciation of the complexities involved in parole and clemency determinations.



Chairman Ranatza, Vice Chairman Prator, and Board Member Fremin sat for parole hearings at Loyola University in New Orleans.



Chairman Ranatza, Board Members Tillis and Barras sat for another round of live hearings at Grambling State University.

Victim Outreach Event

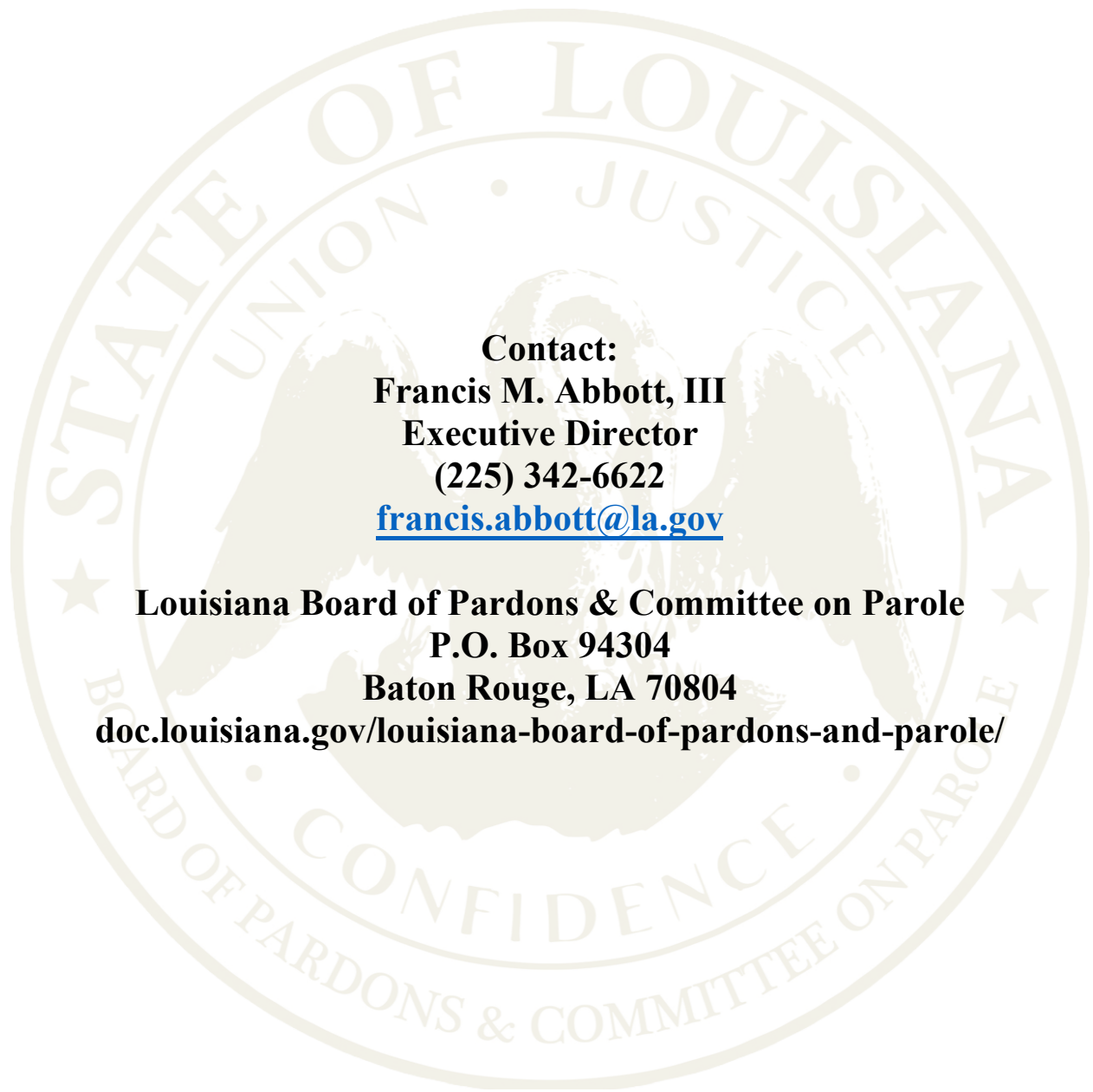


On April 10, 2025, the Louisiana Board of Pardons & Committee on Parole participated in the National Crime Victims' Rights Week Proclamation Ceremony and Resource Fair held at the North Louisiana Crime Lab, which drew approximately 100 attendees. The event brought together law enforcement leaders, elected officials, community organizations, and victims and survivors of crime to recognize the importance of victim rights and expand access to critical support services. Board staff actively engaged with attendees by assisting with victim registration updates and providing information on available resources, while also strengthening partnerships with local and state agencies. The event generated strong community participation, positive media coverage, and valuable feedback, reinforcing the Board's commitment to victim-centered outreach and collaborative engagement.

2026 Legislative Goals

For the 2026 legislative session, the Board will be supporting a series of targeted reforms aimed at strengthening transparency, improving outcomes, and modernizing statutory language within the post-conviction system. These efforts included advancing legislation to enhance victim and stakeholder notification in medical parole and medical treatment furlough proceedings, expanding the use of evidence-based alternatives to parole revocation through increased access to rehabilitation and treatment programming, and streamlining juvenile parole eligibility statutes to eliminate duplication while preserving accountability standards. These initiatives reflect the Board's commitment to a balanced approach that prioritizes public safety, supports victim engagement, and promotes effective rehabilitation within Louisiana's evolving parole framework.





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