

GOV. JINDAL'S TOP STAFFERS WRITE 121 E-MAILS ON HWY. 3132 EXTENSION ... 85% ARE WITHHELD / RESTRICTED BY LEGAL HEDGE

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Between December 1, 2010 and September 30, 2011, Gov. Bobby Jindal and his staff wrote 121 e-mails on the subject of the termination of Shreveport's Hwy. 3132 extension. The public, however, has almost no chance of learning the content of those e-mails. The e-mails - and evidence of those withheld - were provided by the Louisiana Department of Transportation & Development (LA DOTD) in response to an April 3, 2012 Public Records Request (PRR) by the Finish 3132 Coalition.

The involvement of the Governor and his staff, most notably then-Chief of Staff Timmy Teepell, was first confirmed in e-mails from an earlier Coalition PRR. Former State Representative Jane Smith brought the governor's office into the 3132 Extension controversy in early 2011, on behalf of real estate developer and Bossier City Councilman Tim Larkin. Due to the invocation of the "deliberative process" legal ruse, the role of the Jindal staff will likely remain unknown. What *is* known, however, is that Teepell and/or other staff members directed LA DOTD top-ranking employees to work with Larkin and Glover to the developer's benefit.

Relying on a new part of the Louisiana Public Records Act which he authored - R. S. 44:5, [as shown here](#) - Gov. Jindal claims the 3132 Extension e-mails involve the governor's "deliberative process," and thus the public has no right to see and review them.

In a recent study and report on each state's "corruption risk," the [Center for Public Integrity](#) gave a letter grade of "**F**" to Louisiana in the *Public Access to Information* category (SEE [report card here](#)).

Gov. Jindal has acted more directly than any governor in Louisiana history to author and push through the state legislature laws which are anti-transparency, particularly those which benefit his personal office and staff. Louisiana R. S. 44:5 is a key expression of that Jindal campaign.

The "E-Mails"

In its records request to LA DOTD, the 3132 Coalition requested e-mails and other communications by and between seven (7) top LA DOTD employees, twelve (12) highest-ranking Jindal staffers, Shreveport Mayor Cedric Glover, former Rep. Jane Smith, and Tim Larkin.

In response to the PRR, LA DOTD produced 541 e-mails other than those involving the governor's office, plus the previously cited 118 e-mails involving Jindal's personal staff. Of those in the latter category:

- 18 were fully readable and in no way redacted (blacked-out);
- 60 showed the e-mail subject / date, but had names which were redacted, and/or had content either redacted or completely removed;
- 29 were specifically included as "e-mails," but with blank pages; and,
- 11 had other combinations of names and/or other parts of the e-mail body or content redacted.

Shreveporter Wayne Waddell's Transparency Efforts

Before his retirement, former Shreveport state representative Wayne Waddell led the unsuccessful fight against Jindal's anti-transparency focus. Clancy Dubos, also a friend, and publisher of *Gambit* (New Orleans), described Wayne's work this way in a 2010 article:

"State Rep. Wayne Waddell seems an unlikely irritant to Gov. Bobby Jindal. Waddell, a Republican from Shreveport, represents a conservative corner of the state where the governor is very popular. He also shares Jindal's GOP affiliation. Yet, Waddell has consistently — and sharply — criticized Jindal from Day One for the governor's lack of transparency. ...

... "It's more than a little ironic that Jindal draws some of his sharpest criticism from fellow Republicans — and on an issue the governor likes to tout as part of his "reform" image. Truth is, Jindal has done more to gut transparency and openness than former Gov. Edwin Edwards or any other crook ever dreamed of doing. Too bad the GOP's transparency warriors aren't getting more help from their own party — or from Democrats."

The Impact ... the 3132 Extension

Those of us who care about the deliberate termination of the 3132 Extension by elected officials and their profiteering friends may now see how Jindal's attack on transparency matters ... right here in River City. We have a right to know what Glover and Smith and Larkin and NLCOG and all the rest have done to so directly - and openly - act against the public will and specific direction. It matters that the governor's staff had such a role, and even his many supporters might take a moment to consider how the governor they support can so comfortably act to shield his official actions from public view.

Just as with Jindal's gutting of ethics enforcement, his attack on transparency - specifically and especially for himself and his staff - helps create and protect the very kind of government and elected officials who took the 3132 Extension from right under our noses.

[Mayor Glover](#), [Representative Smith](#), [Governor Jindal](#), [Councilman Larkin](#), et al: the titles vary, but their interests and their actions are identical.

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