



State of Louisiana
Office of the Governor
GOVERNOR BOBBY JINDAL

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Governor Jindal Announces Criminal Hot Spot Initiative To Crack Down on Crime & Additional Penalties for Human Trafficking

BATON ROUGE – Today, Governor Bobby Jindal, Baton Rouge Mayor Kip Holden, East Baton Rouge Sheriff Sid Gautreaux, Baton Rouge Police Chief Walter Mondrick, East Baton Rouge District Attorney Hillar Moore, State Police Superintendent Colonel Mike Edmonson, and several other law enforcement officials from every level of government announced the “Criminal Hot Spot Initiative,” which will include housing the East Baton Rouge Violent Crime Unit in the State Police building to help officials better coordinate their efforts to crack down on crime. At the press conference the Governor also announced legislation in the upcoming regular session, which will be authored by Representative Walt Leger, to help end the brutal black market crime of human trafficking.

Criminal Hot Spot Initiative

Governor Jindal said, “When I ran for Governor in 2007, I said we would create a ‘Criminal Hot Spot Initiative’ focused on working across all levels of law enforcement to crack down on increased crime in localized areas. Our top priority is to keep our people safe – and achieving this goal requires all of us to work together – at the law enforcement level and the community level.

“We know that to address violent crime, we must pool resources and work as a united front to effectively combat violent crime. Communication and rapid dissemination of information are absolutely crucial for investigative success. Because of the demand for rapid information sharing, the E. Baton Rouge Violent Crime Unit will now permanently locate investigators from all levels of law enforcement in the same workspace – 23,240 square feet at the Louisiana State Police headquarters on Independence Blvd.”

The LSP Region 1 Criminal Investigative Division, made up of eight LSP detectives and an additional 10 investigators available as needed, will directly support the efforts of the EBR-Violent Crime Unit. Law enforcement agencies from beyond State Police will also be a part of this cooperative, multi-level unit, including:

- BR PD will provide 31 personnel
- EBRSO will provide 12 personnel
- Federal ATF will provide 8 personnel
- The EBR DA’s Office will provide 3 personnel
- The Crime Stoppers organization will provide two personnel to help coordinate investigations.

Additionally, this unit will also receive more resources from the State Crime Lab, including:

- Providing more real time results on high priority crimes while the EBR-VCU investigators are still actively working the case.
- Developing a "speedy check-in lane" for the EBR-VCU to use on urgent needs.
- Adding a federal position from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) to the lab.
- ATF will also install the newest National Integrated Ballistic Information Network equipment in February. This is a \$250,000 upgrade that will provide additional and increased capabilities to assist in firearms analysis at no cost to the state.
- The lab will also communicate with participating members through the State Fusion Center, which will provide another level of collaboration.

The Governor noted that he marked the opening of the expansion of the Louisiana State Police Crime Lab, which has proven to be a critical component in solving many of the crimes investigated by the EBR-VCU. This expansion:

- Expanded the Crime Lab's DNA Unit by 23,500 square feet.
- Added DNA analysts – up from 13 in 2008 to now 22 total analysts.
- Aided in producing a 60% reduction in the overall crime lab backlog and an 82% reduction in the DNA backlog since 2008.

The EBR Violent Crime Unit will ALSO use the fusion center's Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN).

- This will allow all EBR-VCU members to share information across agencies and enable faster information flow on the HSIN platform.
- There is no cost to implement or use the system. It is accessible with any computer that is connected to the internet.
- The center will provide analytical support to the EBR-VCU members because it will be able to take information from the EBR-VCU and merge it with additional information from around the state in one location.

Louisiana State Police currently has 24 troopers assigned fulltime to taskforces across LA working to crack down on crime, including the US Marshal's Regional Fugitive Task Force, Joint Terrorism Taskforce, DEA Taskforce, HIDTA Taskforce, FBI NW La Violent Crimes Taskforce, FBI Safe Streets Taskforce, FBI Innocent Images Taskforce and the Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Taskforce.

Mayor Melvin "Kip" Holden said, "This unit sends a clear message to the public that we will use every resource within our power to fight crime. It sends a greater message to criminals that Baton Rouge is not easy prey. We are serious about cleaning up our neighborhood."

East Baton Rouge Sheriff Sid Gautreaux said, "Since taking office I have sought to bring area law enforcement to a common table in order to share information and pool resources in the best interest of the community. I think that the formation of this unit is a great step toward doing exactly that. Crime has no regard for jurisdictional boundaries, so it's imperative that we all work together for the safety of the community."

Baton Rouge Police Chief Walter Mondrick said, "I believe the formation of the Violent Crimes Unit is a partnership that will pay huge dividends related to public safety. The public expects law enforcement agencies to work together and this collaboration is a major step in that direction."

ATF Special Agent in Charge Phillip Durham said, "Our goal is to work hand in hand with our other law enforcement partners to reduce violent crime in our communities. We will aggressively focus on removing firearms from the hands of violent offenders. ATF will provide innovative technology, analytical investigative resources, and our dedicated agents to assist in this team effort on the frontline against violent crime. We hope the citizens of Baton Rouge will join our team to make our communities safer places to live."

U.S. Attorney Don Cazayoux said, "We welcome the opportunity to be a part of this joint effort to reduce violent crime in our community. We will continue to work with our federal, state and local law enforcement partners in this critically important mission. This initiative allows us to bring our investigative and prosecutorial resources to bear on this problem that affects us all."

State Police Superintendent Colonel Mike Edmonson said, "The commitment of all the agencies participating in the East Baton Rouge Violet Crimes Unit is a positive indicator for the future of Louisiana law enforcement. By working together, our resources are shared and our knowledge is strengthened. The days of a sole agency trying to solve a major crime without any assistance are over. As new technologies emerge, we are able to share these resources as a collective law enforcement community and not as individual agencies. The end result is a better ability to address the challenges of an ever changing criminal element so that we can make Louisiana a better and safer place to live."

East Baton Rouge District Attorney Hillar Moore said, "I am impressed by each agency's commitment to find a way to create this unit in tough fiscal times. We have already demonstrated that by working together we can significantly impact violent crime and I look forward to prosecuting the future violent crime arrests that will result from the collaborative work of this unit."

Executive Director of the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association Hal Turner said, "My years in law enforcement have taught me one simple fact - the better law enforcement officials are at sharing information - the better they are at tracking down criminals and getting them off the streets. The Governor's initiative puts this important concept into practice, and I have no doubt this community will greatly benefit from his leadership."

Investigators with BRPD, East Baton Rouge Sheriffs Office, Louisiana State Police (LSP), Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), Crime Stoppers, and the EBR District Attorney's Office worked together in an unprecedented manner toward to a common goal to putting offenders behind bars and off the streets.

According to a 2010 FBI national crime report, Baton Rouge ranks 5th in the country for murders per capita, with 75 murders reported in 2009 and 69 murders reported in 2010.

Cracking Down on Human Trafficking

Governor Jindal also announced legislation that will be proposed in the upcoming regular session by Representative Walt Leger to target human trafficking. The proposed bill will to amend the current human trafficking statutes and expand the type of actions and criminals that can be prosecuted for this heinous crime.

Governor Jindal said, "This is a crime that exists all around the world, including Louisiana, which is typically underreported and difficult to detect. Human trafficking occurs when a person is recruited, transported or kidnapped to serve an exploitative purpose involving sexual offenses. We must expand and utilize our laws to secure lengthy sentences, and send a message that the crime of human trafficking will not be tolerated in Louisiana."

Currently, our human trafficking statutes criminalize the actions of the human trafficker, but they do not address a person who knowingly facilitates the crime. This legislation will equalize the punishment for the person who helps the human trafficker with the punishment for the person who is actually engaged in the human trafficking. Also, this legislation will expand the type of actions that put a criminal under the human trafficking statutes.

The bill will we will also amend the "trafficking of children for sexual purposes" to include the act of "advertising" a child for commercial sexual exploitation. This will allow the prosecution of an offender under the provisions of the human trafficking statute for someone who even lists or advertises the sexual services of a minor on the internet, in chat rooms or other network websites.

The Governor said, "Our best protection measure for our children is to prevent them from being violated – not just to punish the criminals that brutalize them. This new provision in the law will help law enforcement officials target the monsters that post advertisements or list children for sexual services on the internet. These criminals are using the internet to expand the reach of their crime, facilitate their criminal enterprise and sexually exploit our children. They must be stopped.

"The virtual world evolves quickly and criminals use it to exploit our children any way they can. We must give law enforcement officials the tools they need to evolve along with technological advancement – so we are stopping these crimes before they even occur."

Representative Walt Leger said, "While many may think human trafficking is something that happens in distant places, the truth is, its alive, right here in Louisiana. This bill will expand our current statutes and enhance the ability of our law enforcement to apprehend and prosecute these monsters who exploit our children. I applaud the governor for working with the legislature to make our communities safer and bring more awareness to this issue, and I'll work to make sure this bill becomes law."

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