

According to testimony before the House Appropriations committee, last year, when the state was running a deficit, then Lt. Gov. Jay Dardenne spent \$1.1 million of state taxpayer money to buy two sculptures for the new Charity Hospital in New Orleans. Pictured here is one of them, entitled "River Spirit", described in the Times Picayune (6/17/15) as "an elaborate five-tier sculpture of colored laminated glass, dichroic glass and stainless steel."

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Opinion Column

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Consultant Spending Spree Continues in State Government

By John Kennedy, State Treasurer

The state Division of Administration just released its 2014 - 2015 Annual Report on Professional, Personal, Consulting and Social Services Contracts. A copy can be found [here](#).

According to the report (page 4), "During the period 07/01/14 through 06/30/15, 4,017 contracts and amendments worth approximately \$14.5 billion were approved by the OSP-PC [Office of State Procurement]." That's "b" as in billion, though the taxpayer money will be spent over several years.

The following are a few of those consulting contracts:

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\$11,606,366.90	Covalent Logic LLC	"Provide assistance in developing and executing a strategic marketing and communication program for the Office of Economic Development."
\$8,112,500.00	Celerian Consulting Inc.	"Technical support for LaGov ERP." [LaGov is the state's website.]
\$9,674,908.00	Deloitte Consulting LLP	"Provide implementation and support in the transfer and transition of Common Access Front End (CAFÉ) from DCFS to LDE; implementation and warranty phases for Common Access Front End (CAFÉ)." [This is a new website for food stamp recipients.]
\$125,000.00	Articulate Entertainment LLC	"Provide music artists for events."
\$310,000.00	Chihuly Inc.	"Build free-standing sculpture for the LSU Medical Center."
\$750,000.00	Ray King Studio LTD	"Installation of sculpture for the LSU Medical Center."
\$60,000.00	Obie B. Simonis	"Build outdoor sculpture for community education building."
\$66,160.50	Renee Carmouche	"Provide pastoral care for all offenders housed at the Avoyelles Correctional Center."
\$105,310.00	R. Christopher Goodwin & Associates Inc.	"Provide archaeological monitoring & shovel testing."
\$1,721,783.00	The Extra Mile Region IV Inc.	"Provides parenting education and peer support."
\$350,000,000.00	MedImpact Healthcare Systems, San Diego, California.	"Provide essential pharmacy benefit management services to eligible plan participants."
\$32,000,000.00	HGI Catastrophe Service LLC	"Provide administration of the Homeowner Assistance Program."
\$510,420.00	Sheryl Smith	"Assist in SSA disability claims processing by interpreting medical information." [Last year the state contracted with 23 additional people for \$33,750,156.00 to also interpret medical information for SSA claims.]
\$60,000.00	Merrie C. Kidd	"Provide expert witness services." [Last year the state contracted with 11 additional people for \$722,000.00 to provide expert witness services.]

Louisiana families and Louisiana businesses are being asked to cut their budgets so Louisiana state government does not have to cut its budget. Before we enact the largest tax increase in the history of our state, we should review these 4,017 new consulting contracts and the other 19,000 that the state has with an eye towards saving money. Those contracts that are not as important as universities, public schools, roads, health care, coastal restoration and our other

priorities should be eliminated. The remaining consultants should be asked for at least a 5% discount.

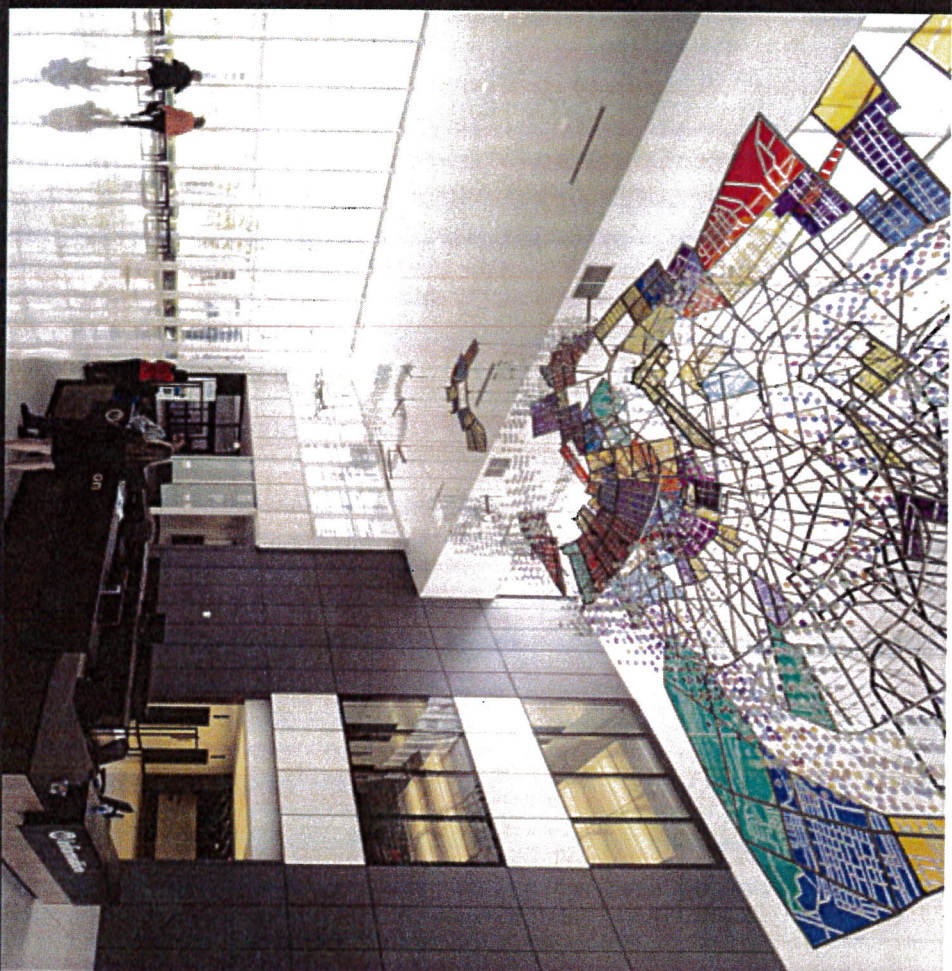
These simple actions could save millions of dollars for Louisiana taxpayers. We don't have a revenue problem nearly as much as we have a spending problem.

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28/38

Advocate staff photo by SCOTT THELENKELD -- A glass and metal sculpture by Ray King, which depicts maps of New Orleans through the years, fills the lobby of the Rev. Avery C. Alexander Academic Research Hospital. The \$1 billion new University Medical Center in New Orleans, expected to open later this year, will replace Charity Hospital, which has been closed since Katrina. The medical center will draw more than 64 percent of its funding from FEMA. Photographed Wednesday, June 17, 2015