Table of Contents

1 Letter from the Executive Director
2 Our Team
3 Mission, Constituency Statement, and What We Do
4 Power of the Provider
5 Women on Wednesdays
6 Eliminating the Pink Tax
7 Lift Louisiana’s 2020 Legislative Agenda
8 The U.S. Supreme Court Deciding the Constitutionality of Louisiana’s Admitting Privileges Law
9 Protecting Abortion Access During Covid-19 Shutdowns
10 Issue Education Around Louisiana’s Anti-Abortion State Constitutional Amendment
11 Building the Infrastructure for the Louisiana Coalition for Reproductive Freedom (LCRF)
12 The Louisiana Judicial Bypass Project
13 #MyLASexEd
14 Gabbin’ with Gabby and Robin
15 2020 Donors
16 Contact
During a year of unprecedented challenges, Lift Louisiana has been a leader in the fight for reproductive health and rights. We faced these challenges—the COVID-19 pandemic, the anti-abortion Constitutional Amendment 1, and a case before the U.S. Supreme Court that threatened to shutter abortion clinics in our state—with an unwavering commitment to standing up with and for those in our communities who are most impacted by injustice and inequality.

Despite the difficulties, we achieved some major victories. We stopped the Louisiana Attorney General’s effort to close abortion clinics during the beginning of the pandemic. We worked with our partners to lead a campaign against Constitutional Amendment 1 that resulted in 780,000 votes to preserve the right to abortion in Louisiana. We expanded our team and invested in our staff to ensure we could continue to do this important work. We celebrated with our community when the Supreme Court overturned the Louisiana law designed to close clinics and end abortion.

We ended the Pink Tax in New Orleans and Baton Rouge. We pushed forward, we stood strong, and we kept fighting for the just world we envision.

As we enter our sixth year, we are deeply grateful to every friend and partner whose support made this year’s progress possible. Thank you for standing with us as we forge ahead to build on that progress in the years to come.

Michelle Erenberg
Executive Director
Our Team

2020 ADVISORY BOARD

Ellie Schilling, President
Geraldine Neville, Vice President
Jamila Johnson, Treasurer
Mandisa Moore-O’Neal, REI Committee Chair
Erich Schrader, Fundraising Committee Chair
Graham Bosworth
Raegan Carter
Cristi Fajardo
Nishi Kumar
Kathaleen Pittman
Tana Velen

LIFT LOUISIANA TEAM

Michelle Erenberg, Executive Director
Robin Barber, Statewide Outreach Coordinator
Jennifer Sackeyfio, Development Director
Kacie Stillings, Operations Manager
David Schmit, Communications Manager
Gabby Rodriguez, Social Media Manager and #MyLASexEd Campaign Fellow
Sofia Gomez Alonso, Intern
MISSION
To educate, advocate, and litigate for policy changes needed to improve the health and wellbeing of Louisiana’s women, their families, and their communities.

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENT
At Lift Louisiana, we know and hold that “women” is inclusive of trans and non-binary people. We recognize the racialized, classed, and ableist paradigm of which bodies get seen and upheld as “woman” or “feminine,” and we reject this paradigm in our advocacy, litigation and partnership work. We uplift the experiences and needs of people across gender identity and expression, sexuality, race, class, immigration status, ability and age.

WHAT WE DO
Within the reproductive health, rights, and justice spectrum, Lift functions as a reproductive rights organization that is committed to advancing racial equity. Lift’s programs and strategies are informed by community organizing experience, policy analysis, public engagement, and collaboration with community partners and coalitions.

EDUCATE
We provide people with free training, information, and advocacy tools to enable them to discover their own voices on the issues affecting women’s health and overall wellbeing in their communities.

ADVOCATE
We engage in direct and grassroots advocacy efforts to influence policies that will improve women’s health and overall wellbeing.

LITIGATE
We provide legal representation for medical providers and individuals to secure access, availability, and viability of reproductive healthcare services.
Power of the Provider

In 2016, Lift Louisiana joined with Louisiana State University School of Medicine’s Reproductive Education + Advocacy Louisiana (LSU REAL), Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast (PPGC), Institute of Women and Ethnic Studies (IWES), and Physicians for Reproductive Health to organize an event that would bring medical professionals together to celebrate their unique and powerful voice for impacting reproductive health policy. This partnership became known as Power of the Provider (PoP), and the partners have continued to provide trainings and host events annually to educate and empower local medical providers, connecting them with community-based reproductive health advocacy organizations.

In early February 2020, Lift and the Power of the Provider partners hosted “Teaching Beyond the Classroom,” an inaugural advocacy training for medical students. Engaging students in advocacy at this early stage of their careers provides them with the tools and the language needed to advocate for their patients inside and outside the clinic.

At a reception to kick off the weekend training, medical students and local providers heard first-hand from other medical students about their experiences advocating at the State Capitol. In total, thirty-five medical and public health students from Tulane University and LSUHSC participated in the training which included sessions focused on reproductive justice as well as communications and media strategies. They learned critical information regarding the current state of reproductive healthcare in Louisiana and how they can play an important role as advocates and future providers.

"Teaching Beyond the Classroom" kicked off with a reception on January 31 at the Ace Hotel.
In 2019, Lift launched a new program called Women on Wednesdays (WoW) to facilitate a sustained advocacy presence at the Capitol throughout the legislative session. Every other Wednesday, Lift would lead small groups of advocates on a tour of the Capitol, conduct advocacy trainings, discuss various topics related to current legislation, guide advocates through committee meetings, invite legislators to join the advocates for lunch, and help advocates meet with their representatives to discuss the issues that were most important to them.

When the 2020 Legislative Session kicked off on March 9, Lift still had hopes of taking advocates to the Capitol for the first WoW session on March 18. However, as the state began to shut down in an effort to stop the spread of COVID-19, Lift decided to transition WoW to a virtual format. Lift understood that the legislature would shift their priorities to respond to the pandemic and that they would likely convene a special session too. Lift’s Executive Director conducted outreach to legislators and issue experts, inviting them to participate in the WoW webinars each week.

In this way, Lift was still able to connect constituents with their lawmakers and keep the public informed about what the legislature was doing to address existing issues and respond to the pandemic, the resulting economic insecurity, and the changes to voting and elections processes that were suddenly required.

Ultimately, the shift to a virtual environment enabled Lift to engage more advocates than would have otherwise been possible. Lift has always been aware of the fact that going to advocate in Baton Rouge requires a variety of privileges that aren’t always available to everyone (e.g., the ability to take off work on a weekday, transportation, childcare, etc.), and Lift has worked to address barriers by providing stipends for participants. Lift is committed to finding ways to continue providing virtual advocacy opportunities like this, even after in-person events return.

---

**Women on Wednesdays**

In 2019, Lift launched a new program called Women on Wednesdays (WoW) to facilitate a sustained advocacy presence at the Capitol throughout the legislative session. Every other Wednesday, Lift would lead small groups of advocates on a tour of the Capitol, conduct advocacy trainings, discuss various topics related to current legislation, guide advocates through committee meetings, invite legislators to join the advocates for lunch, and help advocates meet with their representatives to discuss the issues that were most important to them.

When the 2020 Legislative Session kicked off on March 9, Lift still had hopes of taking advocates to the Capitol for the first WoW session on March 18. However, as the state began to shut down in an effort to stop the spread of COVID-19, Lift decided to transition WoW to a virtual format. Lift understood that the legislature would shift their priorities to respond to the pandemic and that they would likely convene a special session too. Lift’s Executive Director conducted outreach to legislators and issue experts, inviting them to participate in the WoW webinars each week.

In this way, Lift was still able to connect constituents with their lawmakers and keep the public informed about what the legislature was doing to address existing issues and respond to the pandemic, the resulting economic insecurity, and the changes to voting and elections processes that were suddenly required.

**Ultimately, the shift to a virtual environment enabled Lift to engage more advocates than would have otherwise been possible. Lift has always been aware of the fact that going to advocate in Baton Rouge requires a variety of privileges that aren’t always available to everyone (e.g., the ability to take off work on a weekday, transportation, childcare, etc.), and Lift has worked to address barriers by providing stipends for participants. Lift is committed to finding ways to continue providing virtual advocacy opportunities like this, even after in-person events return.**

---

**WoW 2020 Events**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 18</td>
<td>Economic Security During the Pandemic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 15</td>
<td>Equal Pay and Paid Leave with The American Association of University Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 29</td>
<td>Reproductive Health, Rights, and Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 27</td>
<td>Maternal Health with Nicole Deggin of SistaMidwife Productions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lift Louisiana has worked alongside lawmakers at both the state and local level to eliminate the "Pink Tax," the sales tax on feminine hygiene products and diapers. Our work began in 2017, with Senator J.P. Morrell’s recurring efforts to get rid of this tax at the state legislature. In 2019, Senator Morrell’s legislation to eliminate the state and local sales tax received super-majority support in both Houses of the Legislature, but it was defeated on a technicality. This effort proved that the votes existed to get this done.

In the 2020 session, Representative Aimee Freeman took up the fight, focusing on getting the legislature to approve a bill that would grant local governments the authority to eliminate the municipal sales tax. That bill passed in the House with 80 yeas / 16 nays and in the Senate with 31 yeas / 2 nays.

This opened the door for the New Orleans City Council to introduce an ordinance to end the city sales tax. Working with Councilmember-at-Large Helena Moreno, Lift created fact sheets showing the tax’s impact on women and families and presented compelling arguments at a Council hearing. The ordinance, Cal. No. 33,090, passed unanimously, eliminating 2.5% of the city’s sales tax. Lift has since worked with local advocates and Council members in Baton Rouge and Shreveport to pass ordinances eliminating their city taxes on these products as well.
Abolish the Local Tampon and Diaper Tax

Louisiana leads the nation in single-family households, children in poverty, and single family households led by women. Taxing feminine hygiene products and diapers—which women and parents need—is an unnecessary and immoral financial burden.

Raise the Wage in Louisiana and End Pay Secrecy

We support a Constitutional Amendment that would let voters in Louisiana decide whether it's time to raise the wage. We also support legislation that would end pay secrecy to achieve equal pay. Far too many workers are struggling to afford basic needs because their jobs don't pay enough, or they are not being paid fairly based on their sex.

Protect Pregnant People Who are Incarcerated

Pregnant people are at particularly high risk of harmful psychological effects of solitary confinement. In addition to the extreme psychological harms that solitary confinement can wreak on pregnant people, locking them in isolation can jeopardize their access to prenatal care. We support legislation that would end solitary confinement and support breastfeeding and lactation for post-partum incarcerated people.

Support the Decriminalization of Consensual Adult Sex Work

Criminalizing adult, voluntary, and consensual sex – including sex work – denies people their human right to personal autonomy and privacy. Criminalization makes sex workers more vulnerable to violence, including rape, assault, and murder, by attackers who see sex workers as easy targets.

Stop Race Discrimination Based on Natural Hairstyles

We support a bill that aims to dismantle a culture of discrimination experienced by black women and men who continue to face implicit or explicit pressures to conform, unwelcome comments or even outright discrimination because of their natural hairstyles. Hair discrimination is racial discrimination - PERIOD.
Oppose the "Save Women's Sports Act"

We oppose two bills that seek to single out transgender young people for increased bullying and harassment by preventing them from participating in the sport they love. These are being pushed as part of a national anti-transgender effort, rather than seeking to solve any local problem Louisianans actually face.

End discrimination in employment based on age, sexual orientation and gender identity

The Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) is an important step towards ensuring fairness in the workplace, and continues our nation's tradition of judging employees by their ability and performance. It would provide the same protections as existing civil rights laws.

Expanding access to midwives and doulas

We support several bills that would increase access to midwives and doulas by ensuring those services are covered by insurance plans and fully reimbursed by Medicaid.

Protecting Reproductive Rights and Supporting Sex Education

We oppose any legislation that creates barriers to abortion access for Louisianans. Abortion is already exceedingly difficult to access in Louisiana. We aim to ensure equitable access to safe and legal abortion no matter where you live or how much money you earn. And we support young people having access to sex education in schools because we understand the importance of having knowledge about reproductive health.

We urge Louisiana's legislators to focus their efforts on helping people get out of poverty, rather than spending so much time making conditions worse for Louisiana women and families.
The U.S. Supreme Court Case Deciding the Unconstitutionality of Louisiana’s Admitting Privileges Law

After years of making its way through the lower courts, the case determining the constitutionality of Louisiana’s admitting privileges law finally made its way to the U.S. Supreme Court in 2020.

To build momentum and to have a little fun, Lift and several partners created “Repro Wars: The Empowered Strike Back,” a Mardi Gras Subkrewe, which culminated with 62 members marching in the Star Wars inspired Chewbacchus parade on February 1, 2020. The partners created throws that shared outreach information about the case, along with quirky items like glitter gavels. After the parade, the krewe joined in the afterparty held by the AfroFuturist Krewe, which centers queer and trans people of color. Lift invested as a sponsor for the afterparty, and the Center for Reproductive Rights (The Center) provided funding to help pay for people’s parade fees required by the city.

Leading up to oral arguments, a Field Team Sub-table was created, which was co-chaired by Lift Louisiana, Women With a Vision, and The Center. Together, the group organized the #MyRightMyDecision rally to be held in Washington, D.C. on the day of oral arguments (March 4, 2020). Additionally, Lift organized the logistics and recruited speakers for a rally to be held the same day in New Orleans. Despite inclimate weather causing a last minute change of venue indoors, nearly 170 supporters braved the harsh conditions to cheer on the many activists who encouraged all to continue lifting their voices for the cause.

Lift also served as a central partner in developing messaging as well as organizing spaces for community members to process the significance of the case and its potential outcomes. Taking a stand with several other organizations and advocates, Lift signed onto a powerful amicus brief authored by Ibis Reproductive Health, which argued that the state of Louisiana’s claim to have an interest in women’s health and wellbeing is disingenuous when they actively oppose policies and programs that support that goal.

Ultimately, on June 29, 2020, the Supreme Court issued their decision declaring Louisiana’s admitting privileges law unconstitutional. While the outcome was complicated by the fact that Chief Justice John Roberts’ concurrence did not reinforce the balancing test standard that was established in the Whole Women’s Health decision in 2016, it was still a huge victory worth celebrating. After the decision Lift co-hosted a briefing with The Center to explain the outcome and meaning for Louisiana women moving forward.
As Covid-19 began to spread in the U.S., various orders came down from governors and health departments across the nation limiting healthcare services that were not considered essential care. Several anti-choice states callously used this as an opportunity to close down abortion clinics, so Lift Louisiana proactively began having conversations with the state in hopes of preventing such actions in Louisiana. Unfortunately, the state engaged very little in those negotiations. Then, the Louisiana Department of Health illogically handed the issue over to the state’s Attorneys General’s (AG’s) office, which immediately issued press releases calling for the closure of Louisiana’s three remaining abortion clinics. Then, in an unprecedented move, the AG’s office sent law enforcement agents into clinics, demanding patient records. Because the situation with Louisiana’s abortion clinics was not highlighted in the national news, national partners were unaware of the critical need for swift legal action. Despite wanting to avoid litigation, Lift Louisiana recognized that it immediately needed to file a lawsuit to ensure these clinics could continue providing essential care, while keeping both patients and clinic staff safe and healthy. Because of our local expertise and deep, trusted relationships with people in state government, Lift was able to engage our partners at the Center for Reproductive Rights to join us in this legal intervention. Understanding the critical need for legal action and being able to quickly mobilize the resources to carry out such actions is one of the many reasons why local organizations like Lift Louisiana are paramount for protecting abortion rights and access.

On May 6, 2020, Lift hosted “Keeping Our Clinics Open: COVID-19 Litigation Webinar” to inform constituents about this lawsuit. A total of 64 people participated in this online seminar that also focused attention on how medically unnecessary abortion restrictions—such as requiring two visits, mandating in-person counseling, or prohibiting telemedicine—were exacerbating barriers to access for people during the pandemic. Thanks to Lift’s expeditious action in early April 2020, we were able to proactively sue the state, preventing them from closing clinics for any amount of time. Leveraging this lawsuit to bring the state officials to the table, Lift was able to resolve the dispute with the state, reaching an agreement ensuring access to abortion care could continue at all three clinics without unlawful government interference. The suit was ultimately dismissed without prejudice.
As voters went to the polls for the presidential election in November 2020, they were asked to vote on an amendment to the Louisiana Constitution that would deny people the right to abortion and funding for abortion should Roe v. Wade ever be overturned. Lift Louisiana and its partner organizations within the Louisiana Coalition for Reproductive Freedom (LCRF) worked together to educate voters around the issue and how abortion restrictions impact the health and wellbeing of women across the state. These partners also led the formation of Louisiana for Personal Freedoms (LPF), a campaign committee created to develop and implement the "Vote No on Amendment 1 Campaign."

In September, Lift Louisiana launched its "Abortion Access Seminar Series," a virtual education series focusing on the current state of reproductive health services offered in Louisiana and what would change for women and families should Amendment 1 pass into law. Lift developed an ad campaign about Amendment 1 which reached hundreds of thousands of people in Louisiana.

Get out the vote efforts included outreach via text messages, phone calls, and emails. Lift was also able to distribute t-shirts, yard signs, postcards, and other materials to supporters throughout the entire state of Louisiana. Despite the coalitions' best efforts, Amendment 1 passed with 62% of the vote. However, 779,005 people from parishes across the state came out to vote no! And that is no small feat. While this constituency represents only 38% of active voters in the election, we know that more people in the state support abortion rights, and now we know some of the best parishes to target future advocacy efforts.

### Louisiana Parishes with Highest Number of Voters Opposed to Amendment 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Opposed</th>
<th>Favored</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orleans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Baton Rouge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John the Baptist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Bernard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iberville</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2020 Abortion Access Seminar Series

- **September 9**: History of Abortion Access
- **September 16**: Funding Abortion Access, with the New Orleans Abortion Fund
- **September 23**: Legal Challenges and Criminalization of Abortion Care, with Ellie Schilling & Mandisa Moore-O’Neal
- **September 30**: Getting an Abortion in Louisiana
In 2019, Lift Louisiana, Women With a Vision, the New Orleans Abortion Fund, the Louisiana Chapter of the National Organization for Women, Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast, and the Reproductive Justice Action Collective embarked on a collective effort to build out the infrastructure for the Louisiana Coalition for Reproductive Freedom (LCRF). LCRF works to ensure sexual and reproductive health, rights, and justice for all people through advocacy, law and policy change, and movement-building.

On March 25, the LRCF partner organizations held their first virtual meetings with the consulting team at Converge. The work kicked off by focusing on membership structures and committee governance roles. By April, the meetings also included work around the 2020 ballot initiative regarding the anti-abortion constitutional amendment. By June, the group had developed LCRF’s two-year budget as well as job descriptions and a hiring process to bring on two full-time employees. LCRF’s Administrative Assistant was hired in October, and LCRF’s Coordinator was hired in December. The partner organizations continue to function as a Steering Committee, guiding LCRF as it prepares to launch its membership outreach and become an independent nonprofit.
The Louisiana Judicial Bypass Project

By the end of March, the pandemic response had closed most government buildings, including courtrooms. Lift’s Louisiana Judicial Bypass Project (LJBP) moved quickly to ensure that hearings for young people seeking abortion through the courts would not be delayed or impeded. Judges overseeing these cases held the proceedings via video conference and faxed the court orders to the clinics. The LJBP Coordinator ensured that attorneys were ready to adapt to this new process and that hotline volunteers were prepared to explain the process to clients seeking representation.

By mid-April, our partners at the New Orleans Abortion Fund (NOAF) agreed to set aside funds to help judicial bypass clients cover the costs of their initial state-mandated counseling appointment. This was an extremely generous new form of financial support that was previously unavailable to specifically assist young people.

Lift Louisiana continues to represent young people during the pandemic, by working with judges in New Orleans to hold the hearings virtually.
For 2020, #MyLASexEd had prepared to amp up on-campus organizing by hiring several student Ambassadors across the state to serve as activists, advocates, and organizers. In total, 10 Ambassadors were hired in January, thanks to a new partnership with the Feminist Majority Foundation. However, by March, Covid-19 abruptly prohibited the #MyLASexEd Campaign from moving forward with the plan for on-campus outreach. To adapt to the pandemic, the #MyLASexEd Ambassadors shifted to digital organizing to reach their target audience and to collect young people’s stories about their experiences with sexual health education in Louisiana. Ambassadors also engaged other organizations such as WYES, Saints and Sinners, Planned Parenthood, and Sex Fest. In addition to creating original and consistent social media content, #MyLASexEd shared helpful resources from other organizations, such as "Sex and Coronavirus: Maintaining your sex life while social distancing," a guide from the NYC Health Department. Lift continues to support student activists with materials to use on campus and by training organizers on how to develop campaign and communications plans.
Thanks to Gabby Rodriguez, our dynamic youth fellow, Lift Louisiana introduced a new video segment on social media called “Gabbin’ with Gabby and Robin,” which launched in October 2020. Each week, Gabby and Robin Barber, Lift’s Statewide Outreach Coordinator, film video shorts discussing various topics that are important to them as women of color who are working to advance reproductive justice. The purpose is to have an intergenerational conversation about what is going on in the world and how that affects them and their communities at their different stages in life. The series appeals to both younger and older generations, while attracting new audiences at the same time. The goal is to encourage other people to have similar conversations with people in their communities and families. So far, “Gabbin’ with Gabby and Robin” has been well received by the viewing public, and Lift plans to continue the series throughout 2021. The videos are posted each Friday on IGTV and on YouTube.
2020 Donors

Foundation & Corporate Donors

$250,000+
David & Lucile Packard Foundation

$175,000+
Collaborative for Gender + Reproductive Equity, a donor advised fund of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors

$25,000+
Tides Foundation's Stronger Together Fund
Planned Parenthood Federation of America

$15,000+
Armature Philanthropy, a donor advised fund of the Foundation for Louisiana
The Resilience Initiative, a project of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors

$2,500+
Urgent Action Fund

$1,000+
National Council of Jewish Women, Greater New Orleans Section

$250+
New Orleans Abortion Fund

$100+
Bear's Patio & Bar

Individual Donors

Ian Atkinson
Aimee Blackham
Stephen Caldwell
Betsy Cotton
Guy Denney
Laura Fine
Michael Finn
Jasmine Fournier
Chloe Fournier
Jessica Frankel
Catlyn Fulton
Lelia Gowland
Karissa Haugeberg
Chris Kaiser
Talbott Lin
Elizabeth Monaghan
Jessica Orgeron
Beth Reniff
Cynthia Sarthou
Ellie Schilling
David Schmit
Erich Schrader
Matthew Tuttle

Please consider supporting Lift’s mission by becoming a sustaining donor at LiftLouisiana.org
Contact Us

Lift Louisiana
P.O. Box 792063
New Orleans, LA 70179

Office: (504) 484-9636
Fax: (504) 226-5025

Email: info@liftlouisiana.org

Stay Up to Date
Join our email list at liftlouisiana.org

Follow Us
@LiftLouisiana

Lift Louisiana is a project of Tides Center, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.