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Attendees hold candles during a candlelight prayer service on Monday honoring the victims of Thursday's shooting at the Mall of Louisiana in Baton Rouge. STAFF PHOTOS BY MICHAEL JOHNSON

MALL MEMORIAL



State Rep. Annie Spell, R-Lafayette, reads the words of Martha Odom, the Lafayette high school senior who was killed in Thursday's shooting.



Rev. Rick Andrus, of Lafayette, delivers a sermon during Monday's service.

Report details issues at DCFS

Legislators voice frustrations about child welfare system

BY ALYSE PFEIL
Staff writer

Louisiana's child welfare system unnecessarily separated siblings in foster care, left children to stay in psychiatric hospitals after they were discharged, and frequently communicated poorly with families, a new state watchdog report has found.

In its first annual report, Louisiana's new child ombudsman reviewed 307 complaints made in 2025 against the Department of Children and Family Services and found several cases where department workers failed to follow policy and, in at least one instance, breached federal law.

But in a Sunday letter to state lawmakers, department Secretary Rebecca Harris said some of the information in the report detailing child abuse deaths contains confidential information, and its release violates state and federal law.

"The Department has requested advice and

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Legislation aims to help insure residents in Cameron Parish

BY MEGAN WYATT
Staff writer

Some Louisiana lawmakers are hoping to create a first-of-its-kind insurance program for local homeowners in Cameron Parish as public officials look for ways to keep coastal residents in their homes and to combat soaring insurance costs for those most at risk of hurricane damage.

House Bill 150 by Rep. Ryan Bourriaque, R-Abbeville, would allow the southwestern Louisiana parish to create and manage an insurance fund to offset costs of homeowners and flood insurance costs for residents.

"We are trying to allow a parish to redevelop, repopulate, with no state dollars involved in this," Bourriaque said during a committee hearing earlier this month.

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John Fleming says he's the most conservative candidate

Louisiana treasurer touts connections to Trump

BY TYLER BRIDGES
Staff writer

Editor's note: This story is the second in a series of profiles of major candidates in the U.S. Senate race, to be published over the coming days.

Candidates for statewide office typically travel with a campaign aide who gets them from event to event.

But state Treasurer John Fleming was on his own when he drove his car to the E.J. Ourso Col-



► **COMING WEDNESDAY: JULIA LETLOW**

lege of Business on LSU's campus on a recent afternoon. And after he arrived, no staffer was waiting to direct him where to go.

Fleming didn't complain. He simply approached two students sitting at a table in the college.

"Can you tell me where I can find Room 1800 in the Business Education Complex?" asked Fleming, standing out among the shorts-and-T-shirt-

clad students in his gray suit and tie.

After finding the room, he didn't mind walking back to his car to collect campaign brochures to pass out.

A few minutes later, he was back in Room 1800, telling 15 student members of Turning Point USA's LSU chapter that he is a physician who served in the Navy, helped co-found the ultra-conservative House Freedom Caucus during his eight years in Congress, held high-level posts during President Donald Trump's first term and for the past 28 months has been the tight-fisted state treasurer.

Along the way, he said, his record shows that

► See **FLEMING**, page 4A John Fleming



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