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## Jindal announces agenda for second special session of legislature

Posted by [Bill Barrow](#) March 04, 2008 8:50PM  
Categories: [Elections/Politics](#)  
By [Bill Barrow](#)  
Capital bureau

BATON ROUGE -- On the heels of claiming victory in his special session on ethics law changes, Gov. Bobby Jindal is calling the Legislature back for round two beginning Sunday. This time, he is asking lawmakers to consider a slate of tax breaks and how to spend a \$1.1 billion surplus of tax revenue.

Jindal, who campaigned on a promise to curb "out-of-control" government spending, on Tuesday unveiled a laundry list of proposals for what to do with the money left over from the 2006-07 budget year. His ideas range from roads, bridges and ports to coastal restoration and hurricane protection, a list similar to the surplus recommendations that Jindal's predecessor, Gov. Kathleen Blanco, pursued in recent years.

"This is an ambitious agenda," said Jindal, surrounded by legislators at Baton Rouge's Pennington Biomedical Research Center, which would get \$50 million under the governor's plan.

South Louisiana would see investment in 100-year flood protection for the Greater New Orleans Hurricane Protection System; the Morganza to the Gulf Project; financing for barrier island buttressing and marsh creation; expansion of the container terminal at the port of New Orleans; the widening of Interstate 12 near Slidell; and road and bridge maintenance in every parish.

Statewide, the biggest ticket items are \$515 million in transportation infrastructure improvements and the \$300 million for coastal restoration and hurricane protection across the entire Louisiana coastline. As expected, the tax portion of the agenda includes the proposed repeal of several business taxes, with two measures speeding the elimination schedule already set under Blanco. A new proposal would repeal a 1-cent sales tax on business utility bills.

### Big changes proposed

Jindal also added a proposal to dedicate certain vehicle-related taxes to the Transportation Trust Fund and a previously failed plan to grant personal income tax deductions tied to private school tuition. Both ideas -- each with vocal supporters and detractors -- represent significant shifts in state fiscal policy.

The initial cost to the state treasury would be \$110 million next year, with that total increasing as various phased changes take effect. For example, the changes to transportation taxes by 2013 would direct about \$250 million out of the state general fund.

Jindal's agenda sets up a session during which he must first persuade lawmakers to raise the constitutionally mandated spending cap, while deflecting opposition from teachers unions and other public education advocates who plan to fight any diversion of tax dollars to private schools. The business tax proposals, meanwhile, are not expected to draw significant opposition.

The session must end by March 29, two days before lawmakers begin their three-month regular session.

The governor cast the session as a logical encore to the overhaul of state ethics laws. Those changes, Jindal promised, were the first step in convincing outside investors that Louisiana is a good place to do business. The second session, he said, will serve to invest in Louisiana's infrastructure, coastal protection plan and public education system, while tweaking Louisiana's business tax code to conform with surrounding states.



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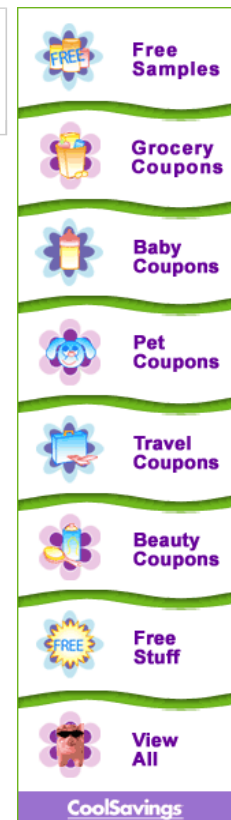


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"I would call our tax structure one of the greatest gifts we can give to Mississippi and Texas as they recruit against us," Jindal said.

The Republican governor seemed unconcerned about the two-thirds vote necessary to allow the additional spending. GOP lawmakers in December 2006 successfully used that requirement to scuttle the Democratic Blanco administration's surplus proposals.

#### Concerns about precedents

The governor spent little time in his prepared remarks on the tuition tax deduction proposal. But teachers union lobbyist Steve Monaghan said afterward that it could define the tax portion of the session.

At a \$20 million cost -- allowing parents to deduct half of each child's tuition cost up to \$5,000 per child when figuring their taxable income -- the plan is a blip on the state's budget radar. But the precedent, Monaghan said, would establish that the state's educational priority list is no longer topped by public schools.

"This is a distraction," said Monaghan, president of the Louisiana Federation of Teachers. "If we're truly concerned about building a world-class public education system, then we have to stop sending mixed messages. Why incentivize sending children to private schools?"

Jindal said the idea, which was not part of his campaign platform, came from several legislators and other advocates of "school choice."

"They made a persuasive case," the governor said. "We think it's important for our families to be able to send their children to high-quality schools all over Louisiana."

Another potential critic of Jindal's tax plan, Louisiana State University system President John Lombardi, removed his opposition Tuesday. Several months ago, Lombardi panned the idea of dedicating all vehicle taxes to the Transportation Trust Fund. Such a move, Lombardi said then, would leave higher education subject to draconian cuts in lean budget years.

Jindal said Tuesday that his plan phases in the dedications over five years, allowing legislators several budget cycles to adjust to the lost revenue. He also said his staff is working to make the earmarks contingent on healthy revenue streams, meaning in low-revenue years some of the revenue might remain in the general fund, which finances colleges and universities.

Lombardi said he is satisfied that Jindal "is attempting to balance" education and transportation.

#### Disappointing Nagin

The session call does not satisfy some of the requests that New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin presented to the governor in a private meeting Monday.

Nagin had sought \$5 million to expand NASA's Michoud facility in eastern New Orleans; \$109 million for roads that Nagin said are not eligible for federal aid; \$30 million for riverfront improvements; and help on the land deal for a new LSU-Veterans Affairs medical complex to replace the old Charity Hospital.

Citing the investment in roads and levees, Jindal said, "I think the city of New Orleans will be happy with this session."

Late Tuesday, the administration added an agenda item geared to New Orleans, this one at the request of House Speaker Jim Tucker, R-Algiers. The add-on deals with giving the state the flexibility to adjust interest rates on bonds sold by the Superdome Commission.

Jindal spokeswoman Melissa Sellers said the commission has incurred a "recent hike in bond rates from 4 percent to 12 percent, due to the uncertainty in the bond market, and this (item) would provide the state with the flexibility to address this issue."

Sellers said the legislation would not be used to refinance bond proceeds to free money for ongoing contractual subsidies for the New Orleans Saints or Hornets.

Tucker could not be reached for comment.

Capital Bureau reporter Ed Anderson contributed to this report.

Bill Barrow can be reached at [bbarrow@timespicayune.com](mailto:bbarrow@timespicayune.com) or (225)342-5590.

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**COMMENTS (32)** [Post a comment](#)

Posted by **micah2010** on [03/04/08 at 10:59PM](#)

NOLA.com is censoring some of my posts. As I look at older stories commented on by me, I notice that my posts have mysteriously vanished. So who has bought this supposed "free press" that we are not free to state opinion? You will get to read this for a bit before they delete it. DON'T STOP THE TRUTH MOVEMENT! WAKE UP!

[http://www.myspace.com/phreak\\_on\\_a\\_leech](http://www.myspace.com/phreak_on_a_leech)

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Posted by **racistcity** on [03/04/08 at 11:57PM](#)

Jindal is doing a great job considering the HUGE/GARGANTUAN mess he has to clean up from prior administrations (YES, THAT'S PLURAL).

He will do fine, but he'll need 4 terms to clean up all of the crap.

Times-Picayune, allow the truth to be told.

Then again, micah2010 and myself are the only two commenting so that in and of itself shows the garbage that we are dealing with and yes, that includes all of the people who could care less about what is going on politically!!!

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Posted by **Astrid** on [03/05/08 at 4:59AM](#)

Micah, I have written several posts which are there when I check to see if I have written correctly but when I go back to read the next posts, mine are gone too.

While I do write on a lot of political stuff, I do not consider my posts to be racial because if I consider the person to be doing bad things I don't care what color they are. I do notice that a lot of the overtly and ugly commentators have been absent from these comments.

And that is good, because the remaining posters give much finer conversation.

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Posted by **Astrid** on [03/05/08 at 5:05AM](#)

And, I give Bobby Jindal a big thumbs up for the way he is starting out.

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Posted by **milwriter** on [03/05/08 at 5:44AM](#)

"Statewide, the biggest ticket items are \$515 million in transportation infrastructure improvements and the \$300 million for coastal restoration and hurricane protection across the entire Louisiana coastline."

I can't fault these priorities....Unfortunately the \$300M is a drop in the bucket -- environmentalists rightfully contend that BILLIONS more are needed to restore the coastline....

Putting on my NOLA hat, the city could have used the 50M given to the Baton Rouge Pennington Biomedical Research Center. Those funds could have been seed money to stimulate medical & biotech business development to support the VA-LSU med complex.

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Posted by **blackie7** on [03/05/08 at 7:27AM](#)

Nagin is a lame duck. New Orleans will only get the bare bones

minimum while he is in office. After Nagin leaves office you will start to see things moving down here. Infrastructure should be priority # 1. Even the streets in the CBD are deplorable. I wonder what the tourists think...

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Posted by **boxcarbetty** on [03/05/08 at 7:36AM](#)

I think he is doing a good job with ethics reform now he needs to get those Katrina Cottages on the move. We lost 280,000 houses in Louisiana when will someone start building them I have a suggestion let Mississippi do it. Its apparent that they can do it. Its so sad that our people are still living in deadly trailers. Did Louisiana Politicians steel all the money I am beginning to wonder.

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Posted by **Bayoumn** on [03/05/08 at 7:48AM](#)

Mississippi Myth. Please, boxcarbetty, stop spreading the myth that Mississippi is doing a better job than Louisiana. Yes they got a larger portion of the recovery money sooner than Louisiana because of the partisan Republican Congress which no longer exists. Shortly after the American voters gave control of Congress to the Democrats, The Road Home program was fully funded. To this date 100,000 out of the damaged 180,000 Louisiana homeowners have received their rebuilding money. If you think Mississippi is further along in the recovery process you need to drive to the coast and see the continuing lack of progress, other than casinos.

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Posted by **mackyavelly** on [03/05/08 at 8:54AM](#)

Doing fine so far.....ethics reform will be only as good as the diligence used in pursuit of those who violate the code. Is it all sizzle and no steak? Only time will tell.

At least he doesn't have that forty foot stare in the twenty foot room that was characteristic of ole Gov. Blank/O.

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Posted by **micah2010** on [03/05/08 at 8:54AM](#)

There is all that talk about all that money, but at the end of the day we will still be riding on 3rd world roads here in New Orleans. I don't expect that to change until New Orleans and Louisiana start electing some "street level" public servants instead of politicians.

Hey NOLA.com, thanks for not deleting me yet.

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Posted by **Destrehan** on [03/05/08 at 9:09AM](#)

PLEASE FIX THE ROADS! Elysian Fields is HORRIBLE!!!! Every morning on my way to work I about lose a tire. I cant even imagine how driving on nice roads would be.

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Posted by **Bayoumn** on [03/05/08 at 9:21AM](#)

Destrehan, haven't you heard? Elysian fields will be repaved from Gentilly Blvd. to UNO. There are also \$56 million more in road work in NOLA. The repaving of Robert E. Lee is great. The calvary is coming. Thank god we have a new Congress!

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Posted by **chumpsinnola** on [03/05/08 at 9:49AM](#)

Jindal is following the classic NeoCon Fascist agenda:

1. Take a close look at the "reforms" he put through--on every item that pertained to himself & his team he tried to strike it.
  - a. He tried, but failed, to excuse himself from having to personally pay for his own violation of ethics laws. Aw, poor guy.
  - b. He tried to have rules pertaining to gifts like, say, Hannah Montana concerts, remain lax for his cabinet. Wow, what a surprise.

Classic NeoCon Fascism: All rules apply to everyone else so that I have all the power and the room to maneuver unscrupulously without scrutiny for me and my people. Page 1 of the GW Bush/Karl Rove handbook. We all should be intimately acquainted with this strategy and its hallmarks by now.

2. Here comes the second part of the NeoCon agenda:
  - a. Promote the myth that you are "Fiscally Conservative"(whatever that means--have you ever met a fiscally responsible "Conservative?"--not in my lifetime) while wildly outspending available surpluses and sending government into deep deficit. All the while, promote....
  - b. Tax cuts for "business" (read: the wealthy) so that the largest available source of government revenue is leached & government oversight is hamstrung by the inevitable need this creates for "deep" budget cuts. Business runs wild, speculation runs rampant & we wind up with a crisis akin to the national mortgage crisis we have now. This has happened every time a Republican has been in power, without fail.
  - c. A token "tax refund" for you, the average zhlub, so you'll keep your mouth shut and continue to vote for NeoCon Fascists.

It's a pattern. It's familiar. It's mundane. It's terrible policy. It has no benefit for you. It's a big yawn. It's Bobby Jindal, folks.

I'll be attacked relentlessly now. But in two or three years when all this comes to pass (Just like with Bush) the same people who are worshipping the Golden Boy Scout will be saying he's not a "True Conservative" (they all start spewing this bile when their guy turns out to be a stinker).

Nope. Sorry guys. He is a Conservative. He's the very essence of it & so is Bush. If you don't believe GW Bush and "Bobby" Jindal are "True Conservatives," then you better start forming your own party.

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Posted by **ztraveler** on [03/05/08 at 10:22AM](#)

If the teachers "union" is against Bobby Jindal...that is a great thing.. Hey, Bobby....test the teachers....money does not make good teachers. We have to weed out all of the below par teachers.....

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Posted by **dirtywar** on [03/05/08 at 10:53AM](#)

You look at the national situation, with most politicians taking on the role of hate-mongering, Hugo Chavez wannabes, Bobby Jindal is a breath of fresh air. It won't be long before he becomes know as America's governor. Bobby, you need to by-pass the Federal government and work a state level free trade deal with Colombia.

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Posted by **milwriter** on [03/05/08 at 10:58AM](#)

Destrehan & Bayoumn: yes, Elysian Fields will be repaved, but remember...some of the approx \$100 (+)M the city received and will spend for roadwork throughout the city, sidewalks in FQ, bike racks in the Warehouse District and other "must have" infrastructure repairs will be torn up when the city finally repairs the horrific mess that is the water and sewer infrastructure beneath NOLA's streets....Don't get use to the smooth ride, just yet....

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Posted by **dirtywar** on [03/05/08 at 11:14AM](#)

"NeoCon Fascism" is a term thrown around all day long by Hugo Chavez and members of FARC.

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Posted by **dayspast** on [03/05/08 at 11:19AM](#)

It is nice to see that something has gotten done so quickly. Let's see what happens next. He is still better than a donkey demo

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Posted by **bayouman** on [03/05/08 at 11:28AM](#)

Conservatism used to mean restrictive spending and low taxation. Jindal is certainly not holding fast to the former notion of restrictive spending. He'll spend like a drunk whore.

That said, I'd love to see more money focused on pro growth initiatives. Play to our strengths. We have one of the most geographically strategic port systems in the entire world. Enhance it every chance possible. The Panama Canal is being widened. This means bigger ships will be coming into our region which means we need to be ready. I still favor the "Super Port" concept brought about under Gov. Foster which gives Maritime, Air and Rail service down river from New Orleans. Whatever happened to that?

Otherwise, the school voucher(or whatever it's called) program is a hot topic but has little impact dollarwise. It's the principal of the matter that will ruffle feathers. I've said all along, it'll be nice to get something back but it's not exactly going to improve the public school system and likely will hurt it which we all end up paying for in some form or fashion down the road. New Orleans' system is so bad that it's akin to a training camp for criminals rather than an education system. Otherwise, statewide, I think we have pockets of hope in our public education system. Much depends on parenting.

As to how the tax breaks will be distributed, I think it leaves out parents who have no children which isn't exactly fair.

I hope Jindal can find some restraint in his spending the surplus. I don't see anything wrong with "Doing nothing" and being patient with such a large surplus. Wouldn't it be nice if we could let that money compound into an even larger surplus. We could use it to lure a major corporation or develop an entire industry which we all could benefit from... Think big.

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Posted by **Howie504** on [03/05/08 at 11:41AM](#)

dirtywar,  
Chavez also likes to talk about "peace" and "Justice."

Guess anyone who uses those terms is bad too!

Extremely poor logic here, but Bush and his supporters often use this idiotic tactic.

In philosophy, this is called a fallacy of extension:  
Straw Man (Fallacy Of Extension):

attacking an exaggerated or caricatured version of your opponent's position.

For example, the claim that "evolution means a dog giving birth to a cat."

Another example: "Senator Jones says that we should not fund the attack submarine program. I disagree entirely. I can't understand why he wants to leave us defenseless like that."

On the Internet, it is common to exaggerate the opponent's position so that a comparison can be made between the opponent and Hitler.

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Posted by **CrowBomb** on [03/05/08 at 11:52AM](#)

"But the precedent, Monaghan said, would establish that the state's educational priority list is no longer topped by public schools. "

That's a good thing, I say, Mr. Monaghan!  
The top priority should be the children - and what's best for them (be it private or public schools).

"Why incentivize sending children to private schools?"  
Answer, Mr. Monaghan: Because the private schools do a better job (as measured by ACT & SAT scores)!!!!!!!

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Posted by **jjay6969** on [03/05/08 at 12:50PM](#)

I love how all these idiots from New Orleans blame the Republicans for all the problems in their city...LMAO!!!

When is the last time New Orleans elected a Republican mayor? Republican majority city council? Hmmmm? Your city is pretty much 100% run by Dems yet you blame Republicans for everything. And don't say it's the Bush administration because New Orleans has had the same problems for decades - horrible streets, outdated infrastructure, crime, etc.

Since when is it the federal government's responsibility to fix potholes in any city's streets???

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Posted by **MetryBrandon** on [03/05/08 at 1:27PM](#)

Howie504,

In rendering your Straw Man criticism, you overlook the obvious hyperbolic nature of the term NeoCon Fascist, which conjures up images of Mussolini-style leadership. (Resist the urge here to assert that the current U.S. government isn't all that different from a Mussolini regime, along with the urge to yet again threaten to move to Canada.)

I'll let dirtywar speak for himself, but I'd presume the reason he noted that Chavez and FARC use the term as well is not to compare any poster here to them, but to point out that left-wing nutjobs use this term to hyperbolically cast conservatives in a light similar to the Hitlers of the world and to provoke and manipulate the emotion conjured up by the term fascist.

It is below any poster on this board to similarly manipulate others by using the same term.

That's not say that the word fascist should be off-limits, but it shouldn't be bandied about recklessly.

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Posted by **Bayoumn** on [03/05/08 at 2:35PM](#)

No jjay6969, we blame the idiots in America who voted the Republicans into the Congress and White House. The incompetence and dishonesty of the Republicans have created problems in our country far beyond potholes. Thank god in 2006 we took control of our Congress and November 2nd we are going to reclaim our White House.

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Posted by **milwriter** on [03/05/08 at 3:46PM](#)

Bayoumn: Oh, my goodness. The Dems earn every bit of a "D" for the congressionally approved FY 2008 budget. It continues the culture of entitlements (2008 Ag bill) as never before and does not deliver on the promises of Senator Harry & Madame Speaker in early 2007 (instill budget discipline, transparency etc. in the budget process). Earmarks and other irregularities are as popular as ever in this unbalanced piece

of garbage.

The Dems had their turn to clean up and failed (thus the rock bottom congressional approval rating to match that of Bush II).

It's time to vote for the best man or woman regardless of party affiliation.

Might I suggest we again clean House (and Senate) in 2008????

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Posted by **kendallini** on [03/05/08 at 3:47PM](#)

Hey Chumpsinnola-

Part of any fascist movement is a strong element of "patriotism and localism"--. Just the obnoxious title of your screen name says a lot about you. Why should anyone listen to a person who insults the very city they are communicating to? Republican or Democrat-- we are New Orleanians- so don't degrade any one us.

Also, NOLA did not elect Jindal (he just lost it by less votes this time). But it did re-elect Nagin, which I think we can all agree was A BAD CHOICE at this point.

You seem very long on theory and short on basic research. A Decomcratic Congress just approved tax refunds, including for people who do not pay taxes. Let's not forget it was senate democrats who tried to stop it -- not because they wanted to curtail government spending but because they wanted to give MORE money away and add even more to the federal deficit.

Jindal is trying to create a favorable business climate because businesses create jobs and when there are more jobs, pay becomes more competitve, and more pay means more taxes, etc. P.S. -

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Posted by **cappy33** on [03/05/08 at 4:19PM](#)

dear chumpsinnola you are a very misled individual, i hope you get off of the left wing blog sites and get some fresh air. jindal has not yet been in office long enough to determine the type of job heis doing.

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Posted by **dirtywar** on [03/05/08 at 4:35PM](#)

I only meant to convey that calling Bobby Jindal a NeoCon Fascist is a little over the top, even by liberal standards. Hugo Chavez and FARC are the only ones I could really think of who regularly go that far over the top. I never intending to call a poster Hugo Chavez. The would be wack.

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Posted by **1maddoc** on [03/05/08 at 4:39PM](#)

As a student worker at a public university research facility who was promised a full time position upon graduation last Fall, I am not as pleased with the new governor's performance due to the hiring freeze. I will probably be employed somewhere else before the freeze is over since I cannot wait to make money to pay my student loans. I am pleased with all of the other actions of the governor so far however.

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Posted by **dirtywar** on [03/05/08 at 5:04PM](#)

Howie504, I don't consider "peace" and "Justice" as being over the top. Does that make me a NeoCon?

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Posted by **GrisGrisMama** on [03/05/08 at 8:40PM](#)

Okay, whose big idea was it to go overboard and line up Jindal's picture so that the eagle wings behind him looked like they were growing out of his shoulders? Other than that, I have no opinion, because he is still in the "honeymoon" phase of his first term. He is doing things differently, and maybe getting results because of it.

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Posted by **gatorlawman** on [03/06/08 at 5:06PM](#)

Where are the dredges in this plan? Show me the dredges!!!!!!

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