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News Updates

- Howard Dean's tour stops on Canal Street 11:10 a.m. CT
- Levees.org launches levee risk database 10:26 a.m. CT
- Warren Riley says latest cop incident is a 'major embarrassment' 9:37 a.m. CT
- Guilty plea expected in scheme to steal housing funds from Catholic Charities homeless program 8:21 a.m. CT
- Judge Seeber Bridge closed; I-610 at Franklin Avenue closed 7:54 a.m. CT
- More

Sports Updates

- Tulane baseball assistant leaving for Illinois State
- LSU football adjusts roster, schedule
- More

North Shore Updates

- St. Tammany grand jury returns indictments in fatal accidents, sex crime cases 10:16 a.m. CT
- Causeway motorists are in for smooth start to commute 6:23 a.m. CT
- No problems on the Causeway 5:00 p.m. CT
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Business Updates

- Port awards contracts for improvements at Alabo Street Terminal 10:18 a.m. CT
- More

Lolis Eric Elie

## Jindal's image has taken hits

Monday, June 30, 2008

Lolis Eric Elie

The reformist image of Gov. Bobby Jindal, considered by Republicans a top potential vice-presidential choice, has recently taken a beating after Mr. Jindal refused to veto a sizable pay increase that Louisiana legislators voted for themselves this month.

Adam Nossiter, The New York Times, June 24, 2008

When Gov. Bobby Jindal made ethics the cornerstone of his campaign last fall, I thought he was avoiding substantive issues and the controversy that generally accompanies them.

Much in Louisiana needs fixing: public health care, public education, our eroding coast. But discussion of these issues might have lost Jindal as many votes as it gained him. Jindal chose not to focus on them.

--- Do ethics changes add up? ---

Jindal may have had a point. In attempting to improve our image in Washington, crafting an image of reform may well have been crucial to our efforts to secure greater support and sympathy.

Jindal's critics have argued that that governor's ethics reforms lacked teeth. Last week's resignations of several members of the state Board of Ethics raises even more questions about whether these so-called reforms can be effective.

To observers outside the state of Louisiana, these resignations and their attendant controversies might not have mattered. The image of Jindal the reformer was well-etched in the national mind.

But the governor's role in doubling the pay of the Legislature has again put him in the national spotlight, and tarnished his image as a reformer.

Whether his real focus was on reforming the state's ethics laws or cleansing the state's image hardly matters. Jindal is failing at both.

--- We pay the price ---

Thursday, the U.S. Senate approved an emergency war spending bill that provides \$5.8 billion for metro New Orleans levees. But the bill doesn't include a provision from an earlier Senate version that would have reduced the state's share of levee costs from \$1.7 billion to \$1.5 billion, and given the state more time.

The legislative pay raise may not have been the proximate cause for the Senate's failure to allocate that money. But it's hard to argue that we need more federal money for urgent projects, when we are spending so much of the money we do have on such a large pay raise for the Legislature.

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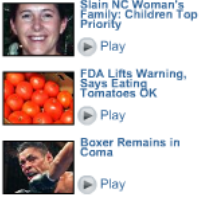
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