

Representative Jerome Zeringue  
Chairman



Representative Francis Thompson  
Vice Chairman

# Fiscal Year 2024 Executive Budget Review Department of Veterans Affairs

House Committee on Appropriations  
House Fiscal Division

*March 27, 2023*

Deputy Director: Daniel Waguespack

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All data and figures were obtained from the governor's Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Executive Budget and Supporting Documents provided by the Office of Planning and Budget within the Division of Administration along with House Bill 1 of the 2023 Regular Session, unless otherwise noted.

<https://www.doa.la.gov/doa/opb/budget-documents/>

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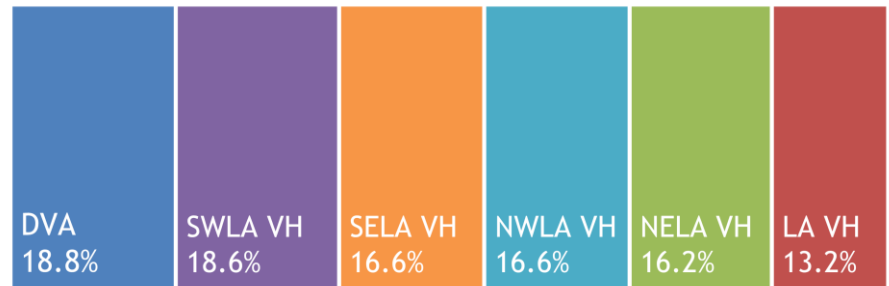
# FY 24 BUDGET RECOMMENDATION

## Total Funding = \$91,034,735

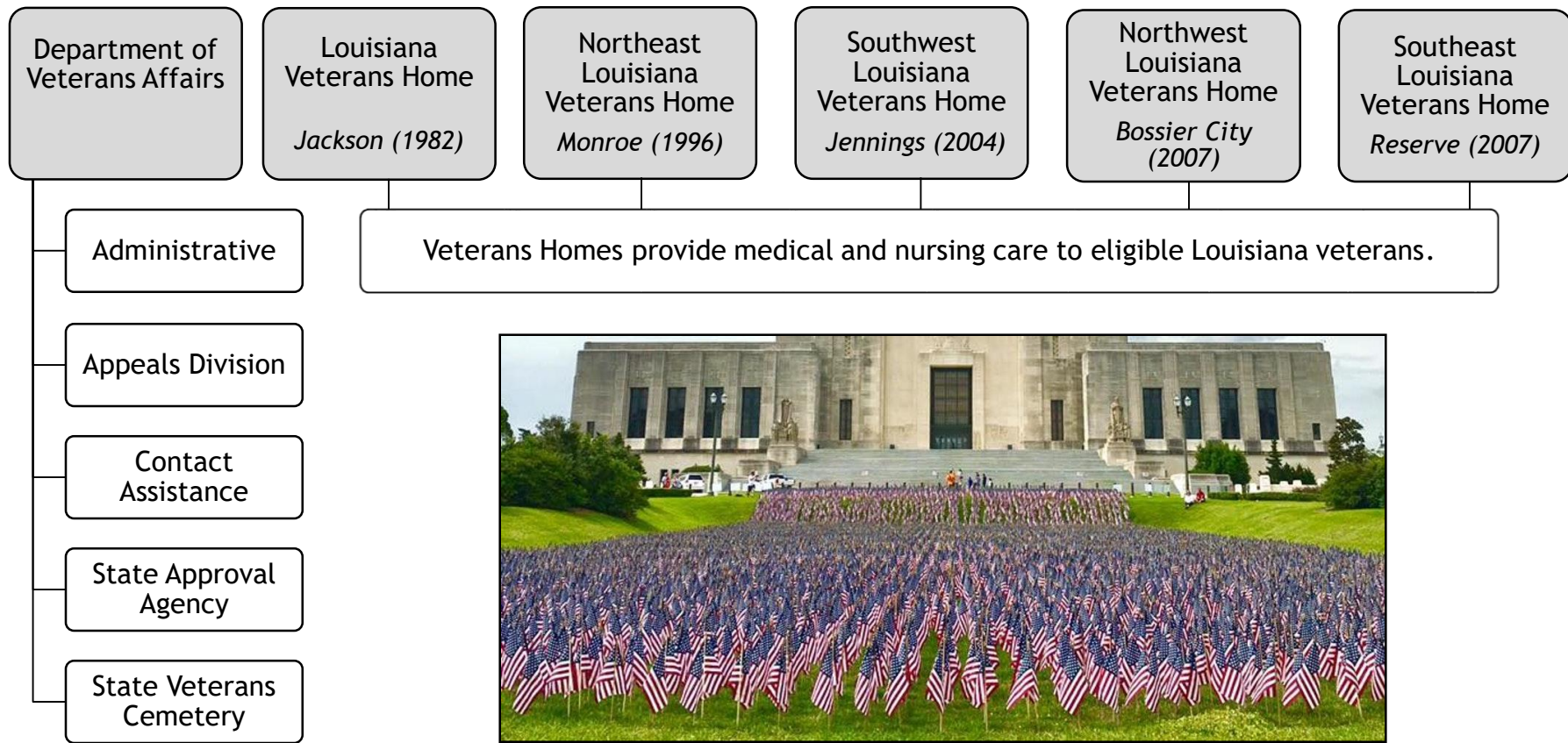
Means of Finance		
State General Fund	\$	14,420,070
Interagency Transfers		2,479,430
Fees & Self-generated		14,857,293
Statutory Dedications		215,528
Federal Funds		59,062,414
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>91,034,735</b>



Program Funding & Authorized Positions			
		<i>Amount</i>	<i>Positions</i>
Dept. of Veterans Affairs	\$	17,146,627	125
Louisiana Veterans Home		12,058,950	122
Northeast La Veterans Home		14,754,659	149
Southwest La Veterans Home		16,934,510	153
Northwest La Veterans Home		15,068,586	150
Southeast La Veterans Home		15,071,403	151
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>91,034,735</b>	<b>850</b>



# DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION



# VETERANS HOMES AND CEMETERY LOCATIONS

Northwest Louisiana  
Veterans Home  
*Bossier City*

Northeast Louisiana  
Veterans Home  
*Monroe*

Louisiana  
Veterans Home  
*Jackson*

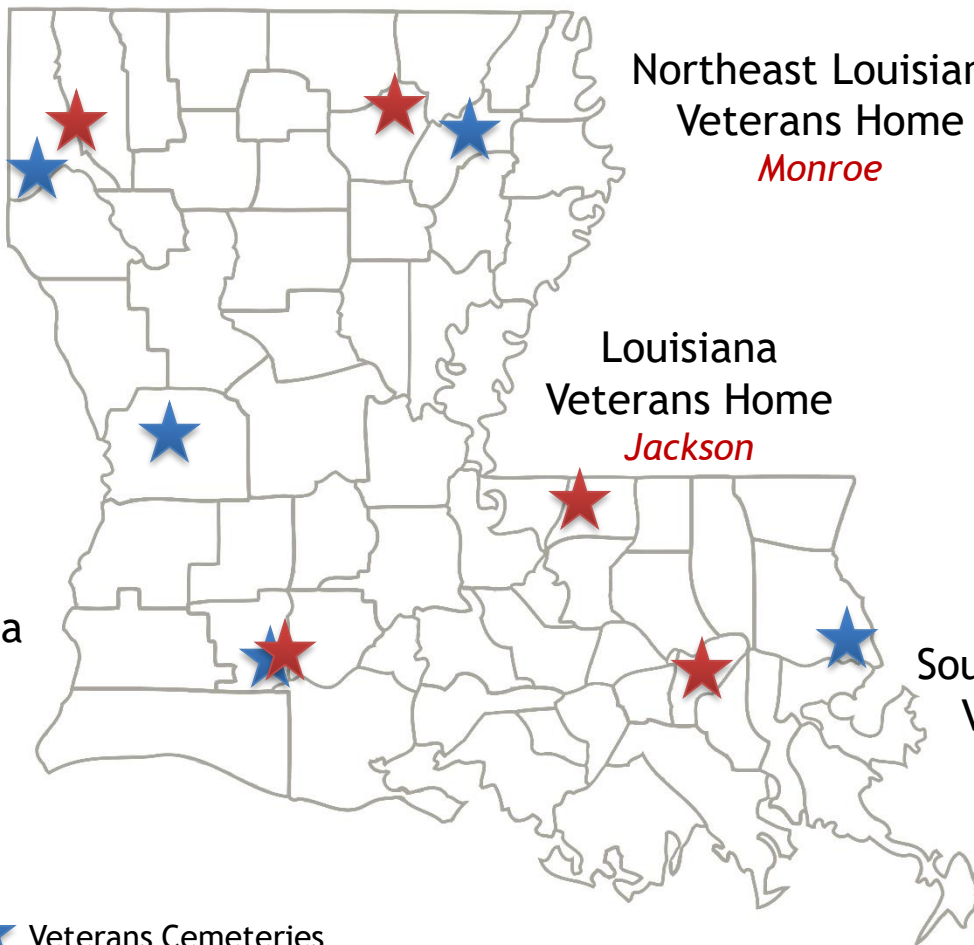
Southwest Louisiana  
Veterans Home  
*Jennings*

Southeast Louisiana  
Veterans Home  
*Reserve*

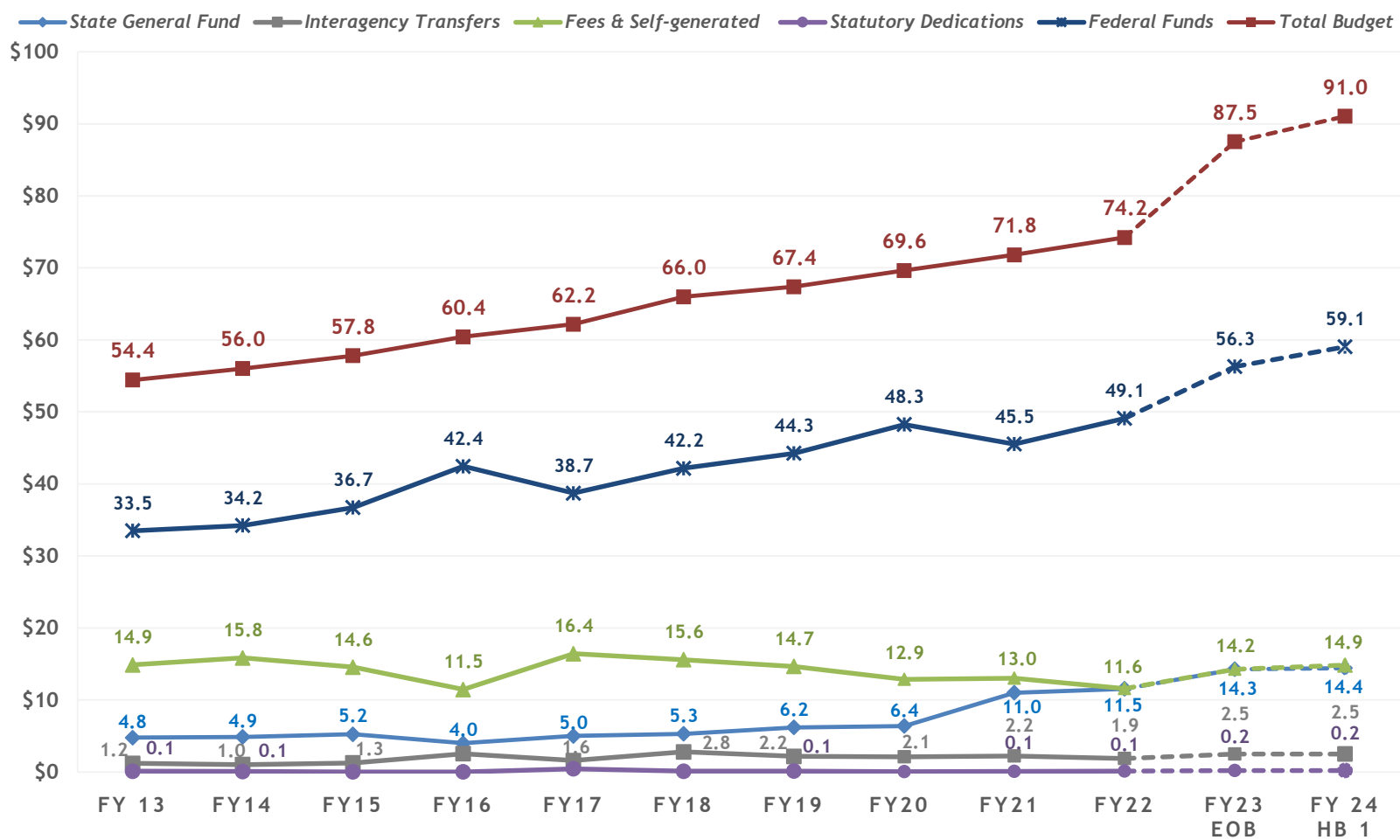
Veterans  
Cemeteries

*Jennings*  
*Keithville*  
*Leesville*  
*Rayville*  
*Slidell*

★ Veterans Homes      ★ Veterans Cemeteries



# HISTORICAL SPENDING



## 10 Year Spending Change

Total 3.5%

FED 4.3%

FSGR (2.7%)

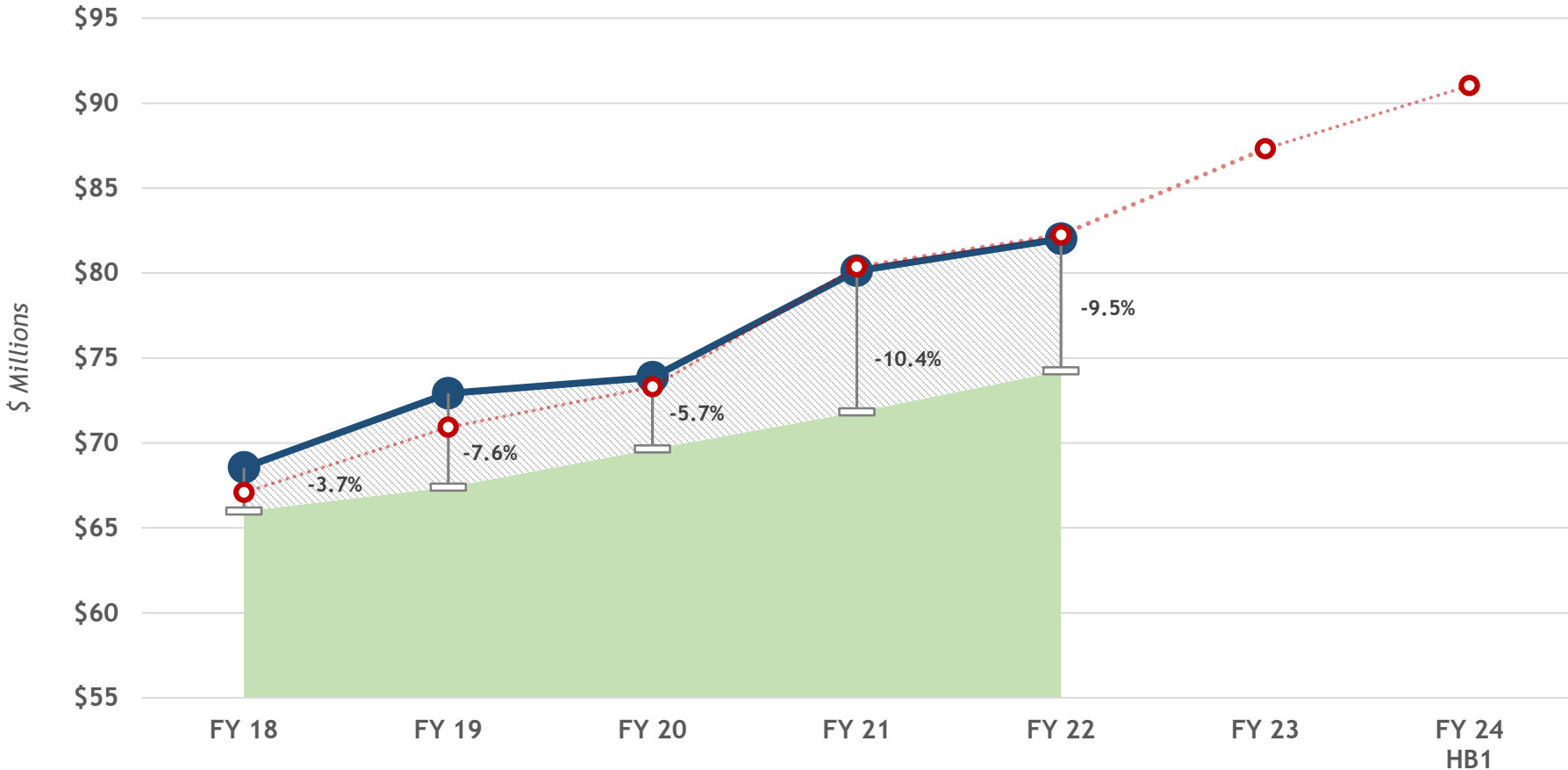
SGF 10.3%

IAT 5.1%

SD (0.1%)

# HISTORICAL BUDGET

Actual Spending    Final Budget    Beginning Budget



# PRIOR YEAR ACTUALS FY 22

Means of Finance	Final Budget <i>(w/o FY23 carryfwd)</i>	Amount Spent	Unspent Authority	Unspent Authority %	Unspent % by MOF
General Fund	\$ 12,734,129	\$ 11,538,735	\$ 1,195,394	9.4%	15.4%
Interagency Transfers	2,479,430	1,865,220	614,210	24.8%	7.9%
Self-generated	14,599,929	11,592,624	3,007,305	20.6%	38.7%
Statutory Dedications	115,528	115,528	0	0.0%	0.0%
Federal	52,080,597	49,119,349	2,961,248	5.7%	38.1%
<b>FY21 Total</b>	<b>\$ 82,009,613</b>	<b>\$ 74,231,456</b>	<b>\$ 7,778,157</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

<i>Historical Total Unspent Budget Authority</i>	Final Budget	Amount Spent	Unspent Authority	Unspent %	
	FY21 Total	\$ 80,138,194	\$ 71,814,684	\$ 8,323,510	10.4%
	FY20 Total	73,867,544	69,631,958	4,235,586	5.7%
	FY19 Total	72,920,268	67,386,133	5,534,135	7.6%
	<b>3 Year Avg.</b>	<b>\$ 75,642,002</b>	<b>\$ 69,610,925</b>	<b>\$ 6,031,077</b>	<b>8.0%</b>



# PRIOR YEAR ACTUALS FY 22

## Were projected revenues collected?

	Final Budget <i>(w/o FY22 carryfwr)</i>	Revenue Collections	Difference
SGF	\$ 12,734,129	\$ 11,538,735	\$ (1,195,394)
IAT	2,479,430	2,059,175	(420,255)
FSGR	14,599,929	11,539,327	(3,060,602)
SD	115,528	115,528	0
FED	52,080,597	41,361,591	(10,719,006)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 82,009,613</b>	<b>\$ 66,614,356</b>	<b>\$ (15,395,257)</b>

The department collected \$15 M less than the FY 22 budget. The majority of excess budget authority over collections was in federal funds, fees and self-generated revenues, and state general fund. The self-generated revenues and federal funds were less primarily due to lower than anticipated collections in the veterans homes. The state general fund reverted back to the state at fiscal year end and contributed to the FY 22 surplus.

## Were collected revenues spent?

	Revenue Collections	Expenditures	Difference
SGF	\$ 11,538,735	\$ 11,538,735	\$ 0
IAT	2,059,175	1,865,220	(193,955)
FSGR	11,539,327	11,592,624	53,297
SD	115,528	115,528	0
FED	41,361,591	49,119,349	7,757,758
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 66,614,356</b>	<b>\$ 74,231,456</b>	<b>\$ 7,617,100</b>

The department collected \$7.8 M less than was spent in federal funds. The lower collection amount is attributed to the timing of carrying prior year funds into the current federal fiscal year. The department spent \$53,297 more than was collected in fees and self-generated revenues by utilizing unspent prior year collections that are authorized to be retained by the department and carried into subsequent years.

# EXISTING OPERATING BUDGET FY 23

The FY 2021-22 Existing Operating Budget (EOB) was frozen on December 1, 2021. This point-in-time reference is used in both the Executive Budget and the General Appropriations Bill.

Means of Finance	Appropriation	Mid-Year Adjustments	Existing Operating Budget
General Fund	\$ 14,102,883	\$ 172,473	\$ 14,275,356
Interagency Transfers	2,481,161	0	2,481,161
Self-generated Revenue	14,239,174	0	14,239,174
Statutory Dedications	215,528	0	215,528
Federal	56,293,005	0	56,293,005
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 87,331,751</b>	<b>\$ 172,473</b>	<b>\$ 87,504,224</b>

## Budget Adjustments From Appropriation to EOB

July	August	September	October	November
No Change	\$172,473 SGF carried over from FY 22 related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact Assistance Program vehicles</li> <li>Adm. Prog.'s African-American Military Serv. Members Monument</li> </ul>	No Change	No Change	No Change

# SOURCES OF FUNDING

<b>State General Fund</b>  <b>\$14.4 M</b>	<b>Interagency Transfers</b>  <b>\$2.5 M</b>	<b>Self-generated Revenue</b>  <b>\$14.9 M</b>	<b>Statutory Dedications</b>  <b>\$215,528</b>	<b>Federal Funds</b>  <b>\$59.1 M</b>
<p>The chief operating fund of the State recognized by the Revenue Estimating Conference from various taxes, licenses, fees, and other revenue sources except for those identified as other means of financing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funds come from the various Veterans Homes into the main agency for support services</li> <li>Small portion of these funds are each home's contribution for an internal auditor position that services all the homes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the Veterans Homes, funds are derived from the residents' ability to pay for part of their care and from employees and visitors purchasing meal tickets</li> <li>In the Contact Assistance Program, funds are derived from each parish's contribution towards providing a veterans service office</li> </ul>	<p><b>Louisiana Military Family Assistance Fund</b></p> <p>Collects donations of businesses and citizens throughout Louisiana, including via an individual or a corporate state income tax check-off</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the Veterans Homes, funds are derived from the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs for patient care and Medicare eligible residents cost reimbursements</li> <li>In Veterans Affairs, funds come from the U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs for reimbursement of various services and expenses</li> </ul>

# FUNDING COMPARISON

Means of Finance	FY22	FY23	FY24	Change		Change	
	Actual Expenditures	Existing Operating Budget 12/1/22	HB1 Budget	Existing Operating Budget to HB1		Actual Expenditures to HB1	
SGF	\$ 11,538,735	\$ 14,275,356	\$ 14,420,070	\$ 144,714	1.0%	\$ 2,881,335	25.0%
IAT	1,865,220	2,481,161	2,479,430	(1,731)	(0.1%)	614,210	32.9%
FSGR	11,592,624	14,239,174	14,857,293	618,119	4.3%	3,264,669	28.2%
Stat Ded	115,528	215,528	215,528	0	0.0%	100,000	86.6%
Federal	49,119,349	56,293,005	59,062,414	2,769,409	4.9%	9,943,065	20.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 74,231,456</b>	<b>\$ 87,504,224</b>	<b>\$ 91,034,735</b>	<b>\$ 3,530,511</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>\$ 16,803,279</b>	<b>22.6%</b>

## Significant funding changes compared to the FY 23 Existing Operating Budget

### State General Fund

\$144,714 net increase associated with expenditure changes in standard statewide adjustments and other various budget changes for operating and travel expenses

### Fees & Self-generated

\$618,119 increase from net adjustments in standard statewide expenditures and driven by an increase of \$400,437 in reimbursement of nursing care for veterans housed at four out of five La. veterans homes

### Federal Funds

\$2.8 M net increase, similarly to SGF and FSGR, related to expenditure changes in standard statewide adjustments; however, \$1.6 M is related to additional federal reimbursement of nursing care for veterans at all La. veterans homes

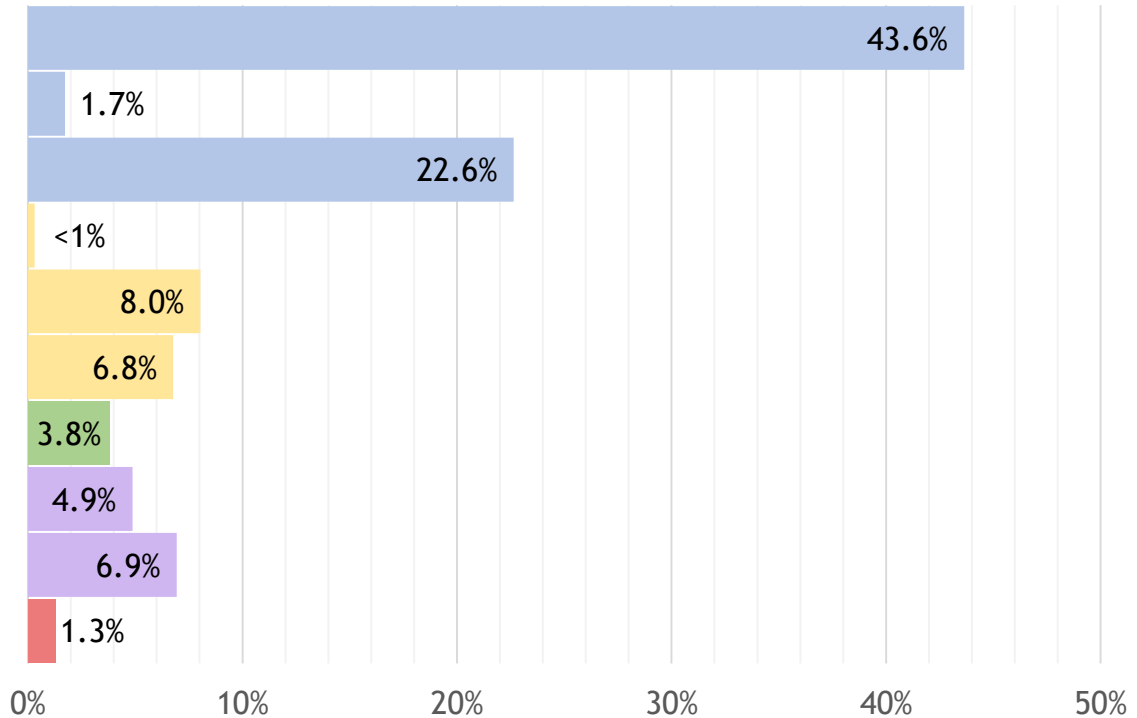
# FUNDING COMPARISON BY AGENCY

Agency	FY22 Actual Expenditures	FY23 Existing Operating Budget 12/1/22	FY24 HB1 Budget	Change Existing Operating Budget to HB1		Change Actual Expenditures to HB1	
Dept. Vets Affairs	\$ 13,215,778	\$ 16,707,786	\$ 17,146,627	\$ 438,841	2.6%	\$ 3,930,849	29.7%
LA Vets Home	10,335,081	12,020,612	12,058,950	38,338	0.3%	1,723,869	16.7%
NELA Vets Home	12,313,365	14,248,578	14,754,659	506,081	3.6%	2,441,294	19.8%
SWLA Vets Home	13,524,667	15,304,263	16,934,510	1,630,247	10.7%	3,409,843	25.2%
NWLA Vets Home	12,450,745	14,753,899	15,068,586	314,687	2.1%	2,617,841	21.0%
SELA Vets Home	12,391,820	14,469,086	15,071,403	602,317	4.2%	2,679,583	21.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 74,231,456</b>	<b>\$ 87,504,224</b>	<b>\$ 91,034,735</b>	<b>\$ 3,530,511</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>\$ 16,803,279</b>	<b>22.6%</b>

# EXPENDITURE RECOMMENDATION FY 24

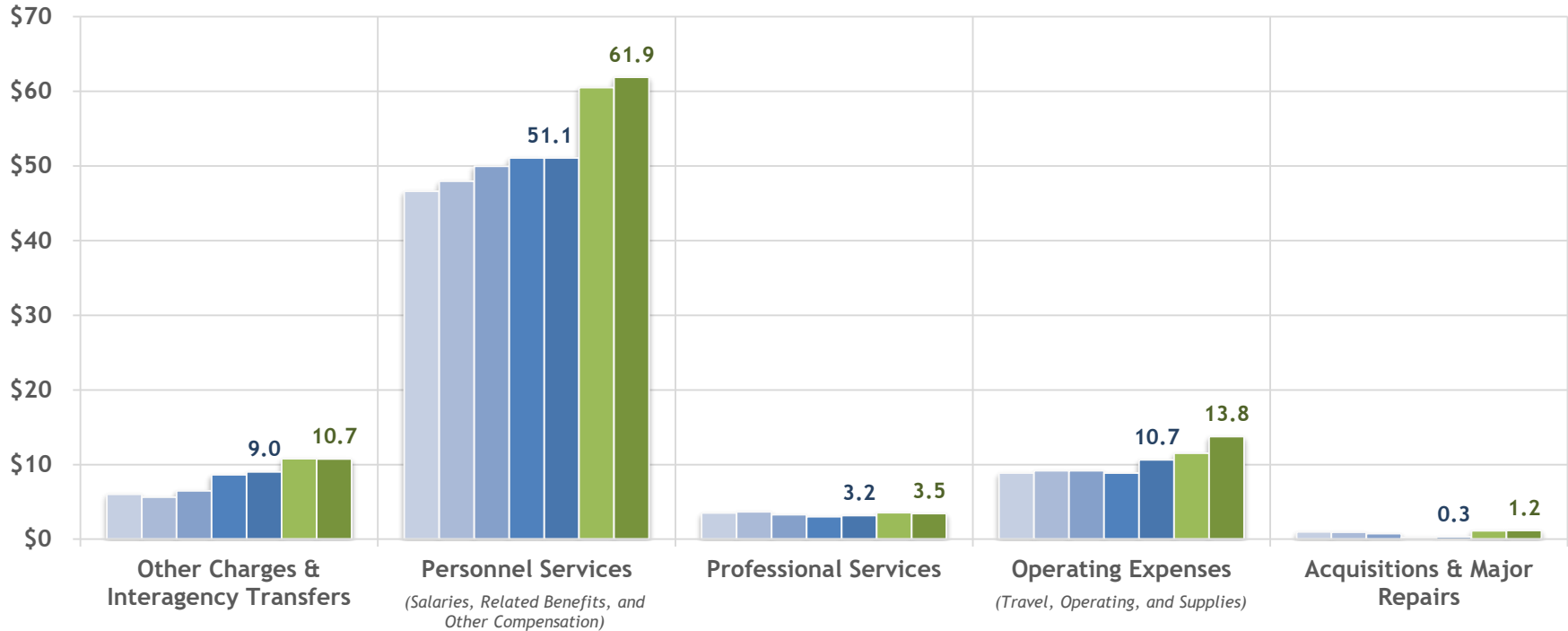
## Total Budget = \$91,034,735

Expenditure Category		
Salaries	\$	39,723,115
Other Compensation		1,571,066
Related Benefits		20,604,518
Travel		278,026
Operating Services		7,317,429
Supplies		6,165,201
Professional Services		3,452,156
Other Charges		4,433,117
Interagency Transfers		6,309,945
Acquisitions/Repairs		1,180,162
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>91,034,735</b>



# EXPENDITURE HISTORY

Fiscal Year: **Actual Expenditures** 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 **Budgeted Amount** 2023 EOB 2024 HB1



## 5 Year Average Spending per Expenditure Category

\$7.2 M : 10.3%	\$49.3 M : 70.7%	\$3.3 M : 4.8%	\$9.3 M : 13.4%	\$646,000 : 0.9%
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# EXPENDITURE COMPARISON

Expenditure Category	FY22 Actual Expenditures	FY23 Existing Operating Budget 12/1/22	FY24 HB1 Budget	Change Existing Operating Budget to HB1		Change Actual Expenditures to HB1	
Salaries	\$ 35,041,535	\$ 39,531,858	\$ 39,723,115	\$ 191,257	0.5%	\$ 4,681,580	13.4%
Other Compensation	802,486	1,640,595	1,571,066	(69,529)	(4.2%)	768,580	95.8%
Related Benefits	15,221,177	19,320,377	20,604,518	1,284,141	6.6%	5,383,341	35.4%
Travel	175,884	248,003	278,026	30,023	12.1%	102,142	58.1%
Operating Services	4,725,517	5,118,244	7,317,429	2,199,185	43.0%	2,591,912	54.8%
Supplies	5,751,028	6,147,701	6,165,201	17,500	0.3%	414,173	7.2%
Professional Services	3,151,599	3,552,156	3,452,156	(100,000)	(2.8%)	300,557	9.5%
Other Charges	2,917,800	4,474,178	4,433,117	(41,061)	(0.9%)	1,515,317	51.9%
Interagency Transfers	6,115,893	6,329,599	6,309,945	(19,654)	(0.3%)	194,052	3.2%
Acquisitions/Repairs	328,537	1,141,513	1,180,162	38,649	3.4%	851,625	259.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 74,231,456</b>	<b>\$ 87,504,224</b>	<b>\$ 91,034,735</b>	<b>\$ 3,530,511</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>\$ 16,803,279</b>	<b>22.6%</b>



# SIGNIFICANT EXPENDITURE CHANGES FY 24

*Compared to the FY 23 Existing Operating Budget*

Personnel Services	Operating Expenses	Acquisitions/Repairs
<p><b>\$1.4 M net increased due to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$2.5 M added for classified and unclassified employee pay increases, also includes a civil service pay scale adjustment for certain positions</li> <li>• \$2.4 M added to cover the base need for related benefits, retirement contribution rate changes, and group insurance rate changes for active and retired employees</li> <li>• Converting 2 administrative coordinator job appointments to authorized positions at Leesville and Jennings cemeteries and one LaVetCorps administrative coordinator to help with scheduling, reporting, and compliance</li> <li>• <b>(\$2.5 M)</b> decrease to factor in projected savings from vacant positions in FY 24</li> <li>• <b>(\$2.0 M)</b> decrease to remove funding for the 27th payroll in FY 23</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$2.2 M net increase primarily driven by:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$2.2 M to provide for contract nursing care for veterans at veterans homes, includes registered nurses (RNs), licensed practical nurses (LPNs), and certified nursing assistants (CNAs)</li> <li>• \$30,023 for additional travel expenses associated with veterans assistance counselors that are required to travel to various veterans service offices across the state and to account for the state mileage reimbursement rate change</li> <li>• \$17,500 provides for adobe acrobat licenses for regional managers and hot spots in rural veteran services offices to maintain internet access</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$38,649 net increase from:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$1.2 M to provide for vehicles, equipment, and major repairs at the veterans homes and cemeteries</li> <li>• Removal of <b>(\$1.1 M)</b> associated with vehicles, equipment, and major repairs at the veterans homes and cemeteries funded in the current year</li> <li>• Removal of <b>(\$72,473)</b> in expenses in the current year's budget carried over from FY 22 used for replacement vehicles</li> </ul>

# OTHER CHARGES/INTERAGENCY TRANSFERS

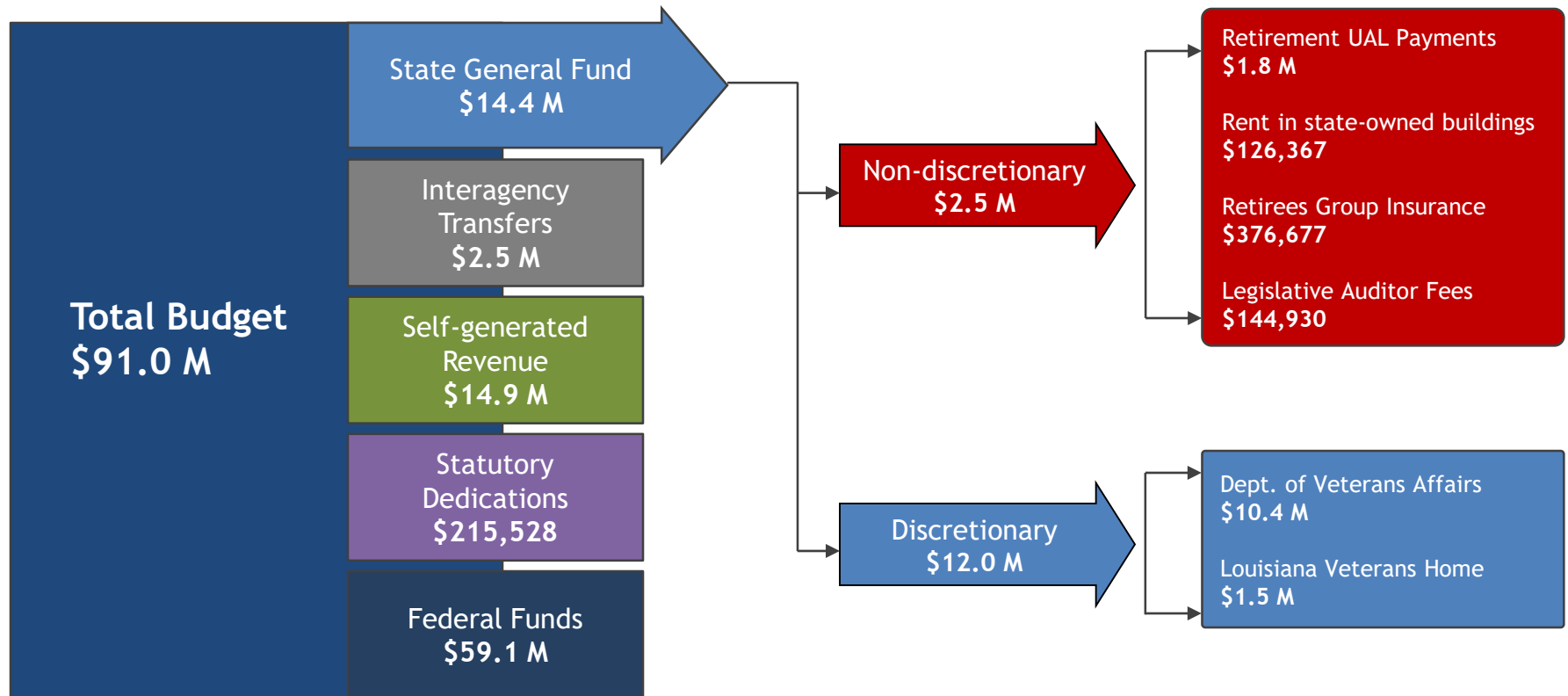
## Other Charges

Amount	Description
\$ 3,848,999	Louisiana National Guard Disability Claims
295,987	LaVetCorps
215,528	Military Family Assistance Program
52,603	Louisiana Veterans Honor Medals
20,000	Burials for indigent veterans
<b>\$ 4,433,117</b>	<b>Total Other Charges</b>

## Interagency Transfers

Amount	Description
\$ 2,608,275	Transfers within the department for services
1,713,299	Office of Risk Management (ORM)
1,068,398	Office of Technology Services (OTS)
234,696	Rent in state-owned buildings
212,556	Civil Services Fees
144,930	Legislative Auditor Fees
76,480	Office of State Procurement (OSP)
43,461	Uniform Payroll System (UPS)
207,850	Various other IAT expenditures
<b>\$ 6,309,945</b>	<b>Total Interagency Transfers</b>

# DISCRETIONARY EXPENSES FY 24



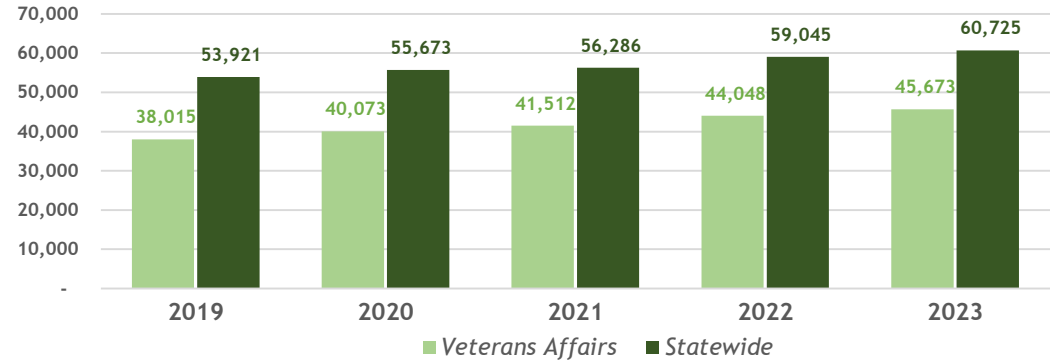
*\*Figures may not add precisely due to rounding\**

# PERSONNEL INFORMATION

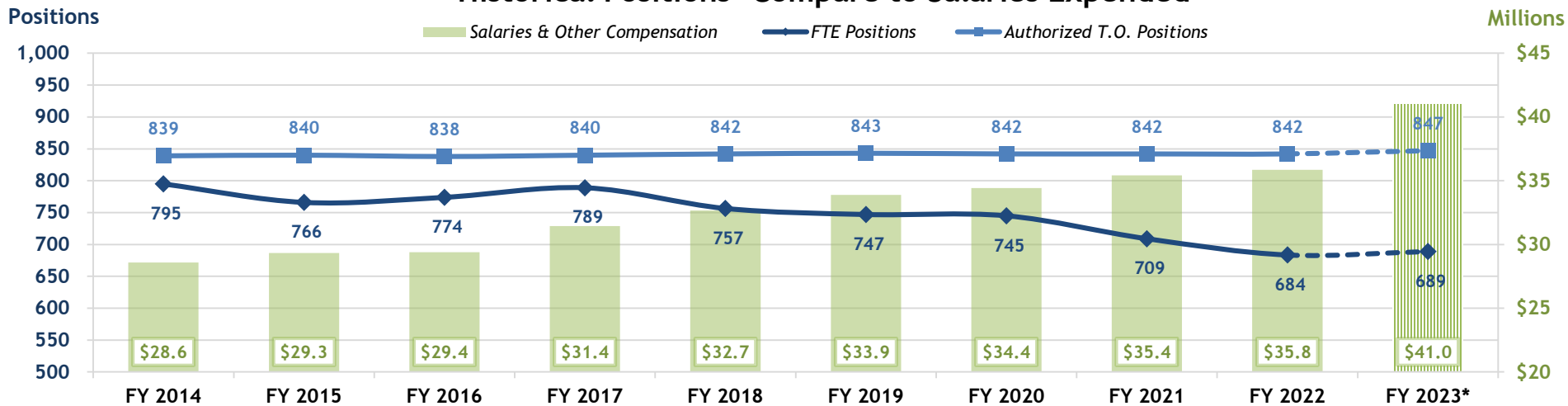
## FY 2024 Recommended Positions

850	Total Authorized T.O. Positions (844 Classified, 6 Unclassified)
0	Authorized Other Charges Positions
0	Non-T.O. FTE Positions
175	Vacant Positions (January 30, 2023)

## Historical Average Salary



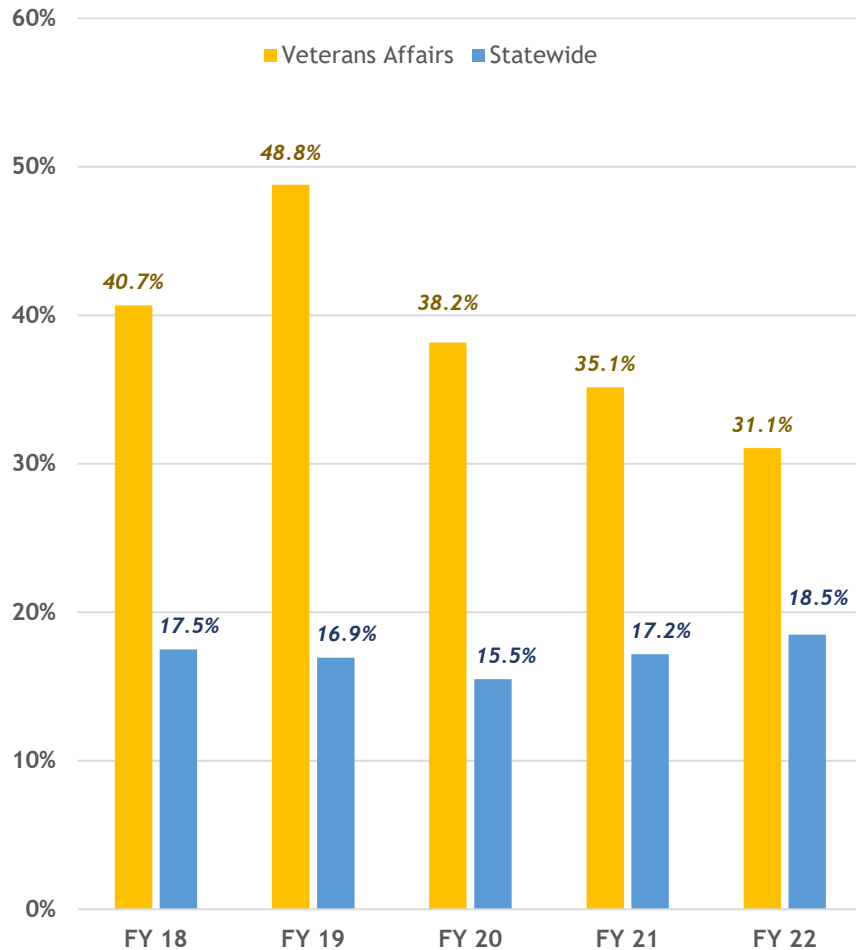
## Historical Positions<sup>1</sup> Compare to Salaries Expended



<sup>1</sup> FTE Source: Dept. of Civil Service Weekly Report on State Employment

\* Existing Operating Budget on 12/1/22

# TURNOVER HISTORY

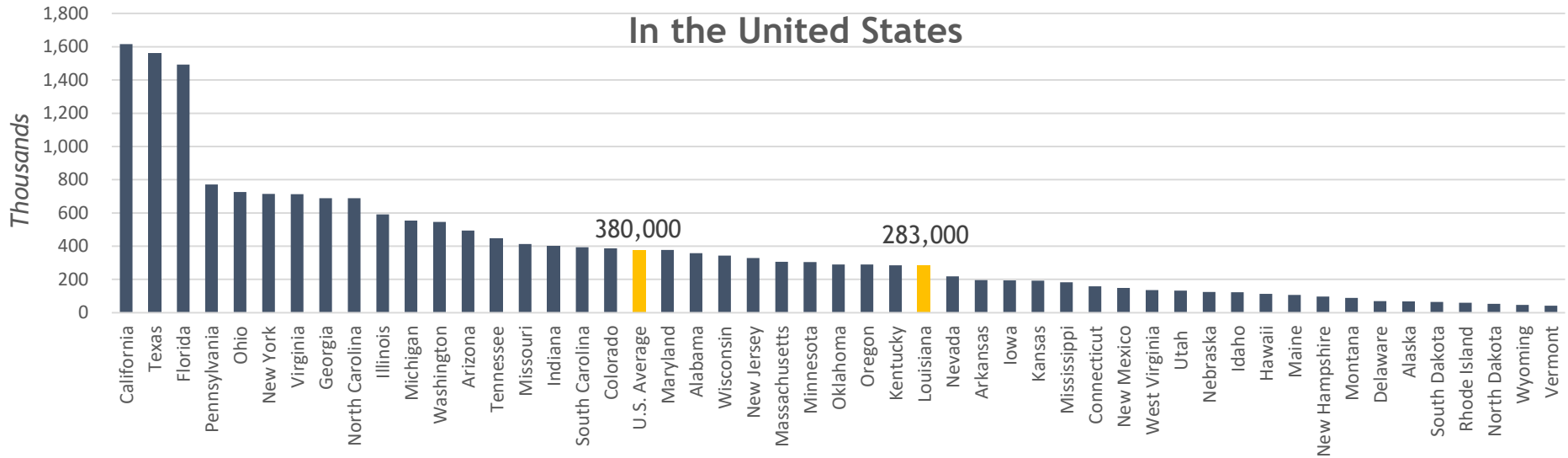


## Top Positions Vacated FY 2022

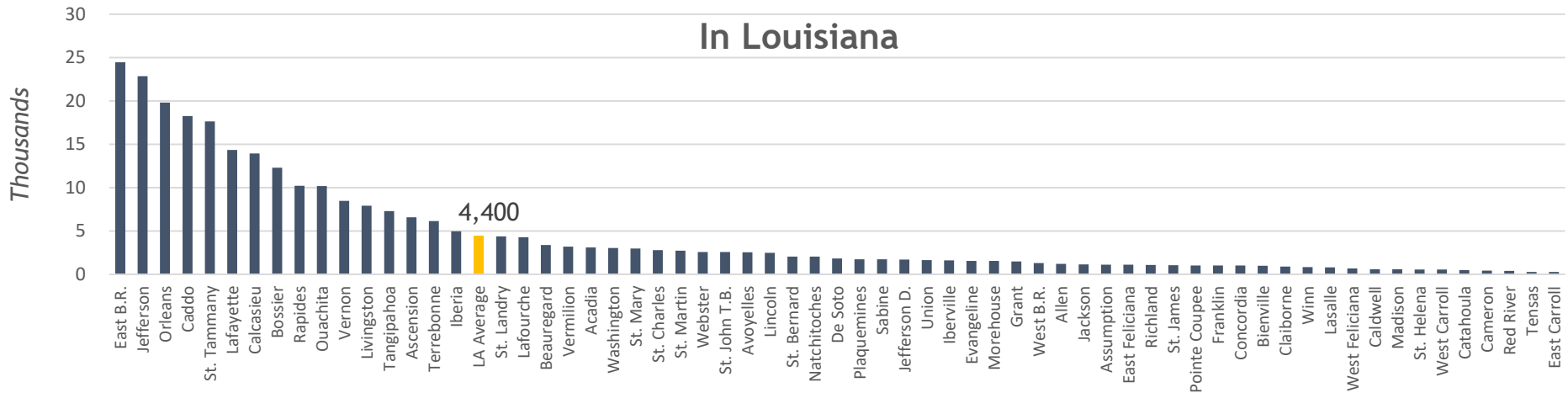
Position	Number of Employees	Separations	Turnover Rate
Nursing Assistant 2	129	76	58.9%
Practical Nurse - Licensed 3	86	18	20.9%
Custodian 2	33	15	45.5%
Food Service Specialist 3	32	10	31.3%
Maintenance Repairer 2	13	5	38.5%

# ESTIMATED NUMBER OF VETERANS

## In the United States



## In Louisiana



Source: Data from the National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics (FFY 21), Office of Enterprise Integration, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

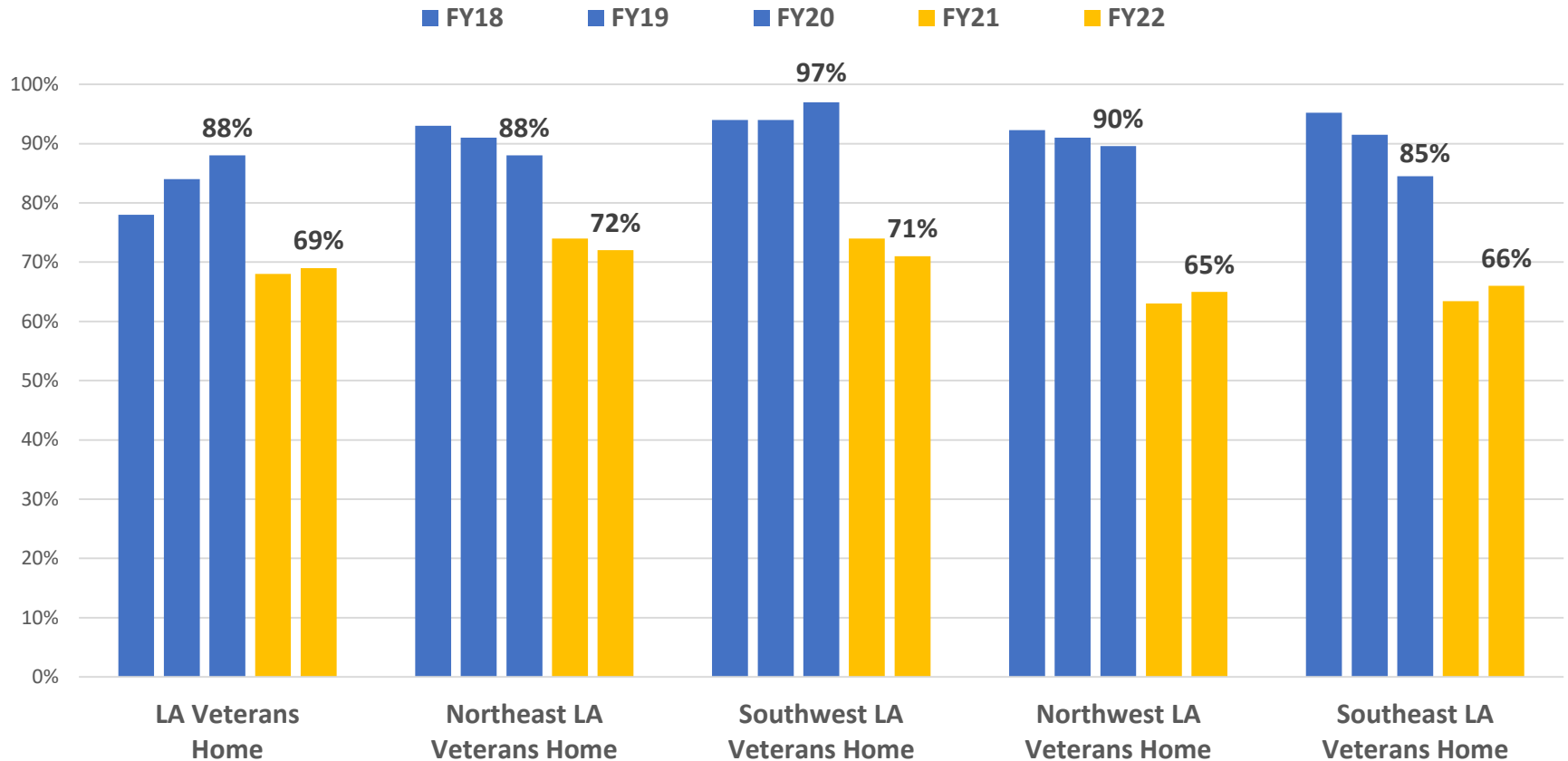
# VETERANS HOME AVERAGE COST

## Five-year historical averages of the five state run veterans homes

Averages	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
Daily Census	138	136	131	103	103
Occupancy Rate	91%	90%	87%	68%	68%
Cost per Patient per Day	\$224	\$239	\$251	\$313	\$311
Cost per Patient per Year	\$81,760	\$87,235	\$91,615	\$114,245	\$113,515

# VETERANS HOMES OCCUPANCY RATES

How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected Louisiana veterans homes occupancy rates?



Source: Office of Planning and Budget - Budget Supporting Documents and Louisiana Performance Accountability System (LaPAS)



# DEPARTMENT CONTACTS



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**Sonya LaCasse**

*Chief Financial Officer*

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# DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW



***Mission:*** *To provide comprehensive care and quality service to Louisiana's Veterans, and their families, with regard to health care, education, disability benefits, long-term care, and burial honors*

## Administration

### Office of the Secretary

Handles the management for the activities, performance, and overall operation for the Department of Veterans Affairs

- **Military Family Assistance Fund** - addresses financial hardships of qualified veterans, Louisiana National Guardsmen, and Reservists and their dependents by paying for a variety of items such as food, housing, medical expenses, auto repair, and more

### Human Resources

Maintains all personnel records, regulates position classification, pay administration, hiring and firing, and employee relations for the department

### Accounting and Purchasing

Plans, prepares, and executes annual department operating budgets, and is responsible for requesting funds. It also maintains and controls financial records of receipts and disbursements

### Training and Information

Provides specialized classroom and field training to all newly appointed Veterans Assistance Counselors

# DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

## Appeals Division

- Represents veterans and/or their dependents on claims for benefits to which they are entitled before rating boards of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and its Board of Vet Appeals
- Represents and advocates for veterans before all agencies administering programs that affect veterans

## Contact Assistance

- Parish offices with veterans assistance counselors help process and develop claims to determine a veteran's eligibility for benefits
- Assists veterans and their families with various problems such as medical services, compensation, pension programs, education, home loans, employment, insurance, and additional benefits when a patient is in a nursing home

## State Approval Agency

- Approves, supervises, and provides technical assistance to the institutions and training establishments for veterans
- Makes supervisory visits to all active schools, institutions of higher learning, non-college degree programs, job training programs and flight schools to ensure that the approved institutions are maintaining the approval criteria as approved and as set out in the Operation Plan and the Veterans Administration contract
- Conducts inspection visits on new schools seeking approval, and additional visits at the request of Veterans Affairs



# DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW



## Veterans Cemeteries

- The department constructs, operates, and maintains veterans cemeteries throughout Louisiana
- Available for eligible veterans, their spouses, and dependent children (at no charge for veteran burials)

## Veterans Homes

- Provides nursing care to eligible veterans in five veteran nursing homes
- Provides a variety of services including long-and short-term care, rehabilitative therapies, Alzheimer's care, skilled nursing, and centralized pharmacy services