



Snapshot

Mar. 28 Update

The Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana

PAR Snapshot: Mar. 28 Update *Legislative Session Trends*

Louisiana Legislature Passes Average of 682 Bills Per Year

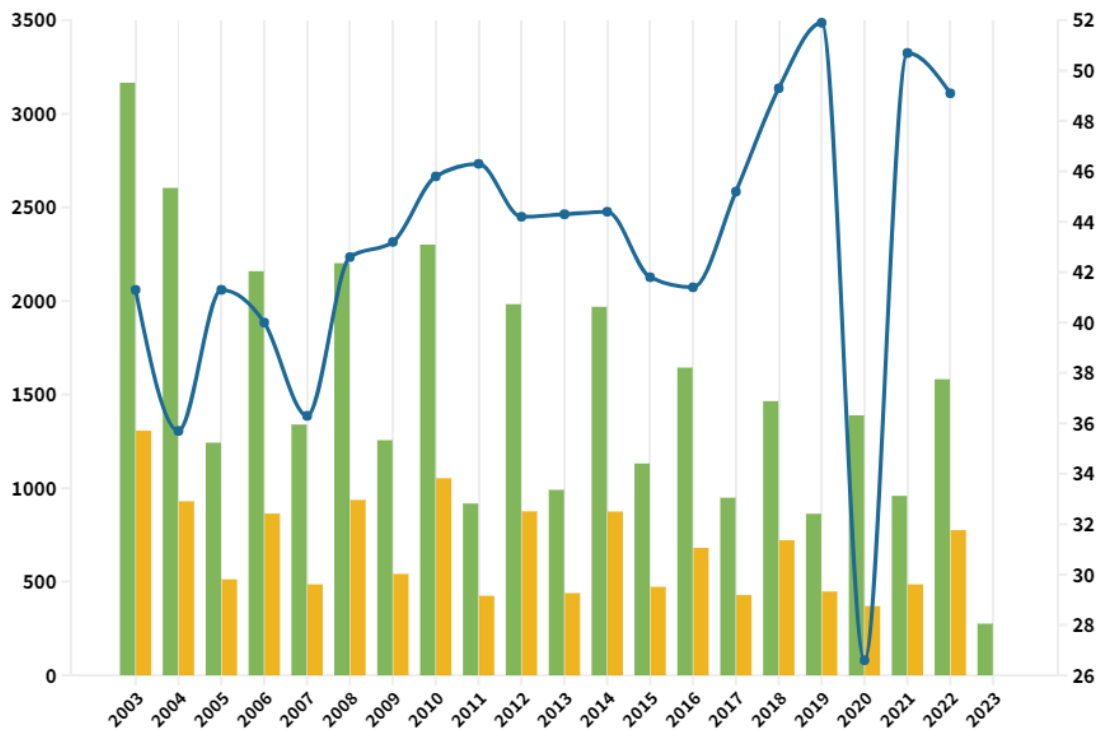
In even-numbered years, the regular session is longer. Lawmakers are allowed to file an unlimited number of bills about general state issues but can't debate most tax issues.

Voters in November 2002 agreed to a legislative effort to rework the session calendar. The constitutional amendment flipped the sessions, moving fiscal sessions from even-numbered years to odd-numbered years and lengthening the fiscal sessions to 45 working legislative days in 60 calendar days. The change also allowed the introduction of five non-fiscal bills with statewide impact.

After the amendment passed, lawmakers held back-to-back general, non-fiscal sessions in 2003 and 2004 to reorder the calendar.

Bills Filed v. Enacted 2003-2023

■ Percent Passed ■ Bills Filed ■ Bills Enacted



Source: Louisiana State Legislature

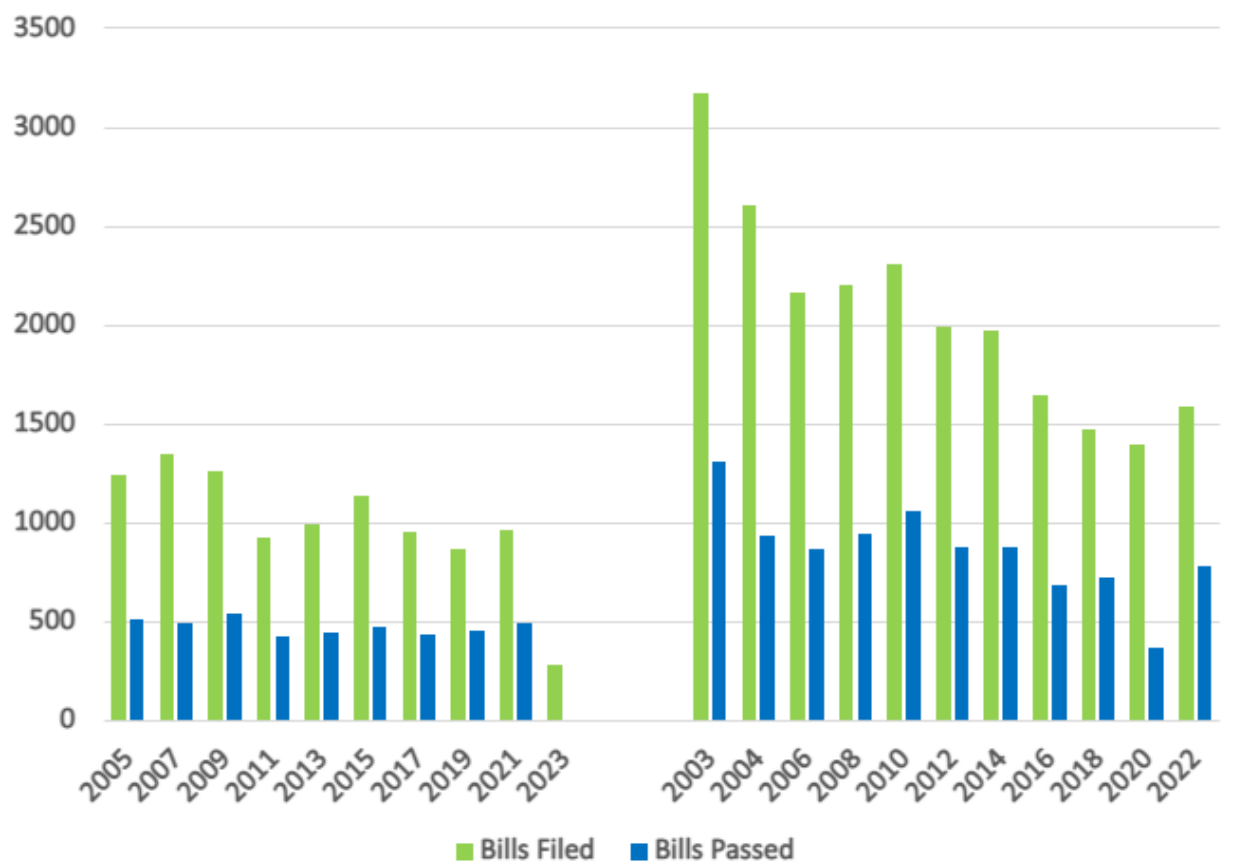
One discernible trend from the graphic above is a gradual decline in the number of bills filed since 2003. This may reflect the impact of term limits on legislators, which took effect during the 2007 election cycle.

Because each lawmaker is limited to five non-fiscal bills during a fiscal session, the number of bills filed decreases significantly every odd-numbered year.

Legislators might sponsor thousands of bills in one session, but only a small percentage become laws. In the past two decades, only two sessions have seen a majority of the bills proposed win final passage: the 2019 session with 51.9% of bills enacted into law and the 2021 session with 50.7%.

Over the course of 20 years, the Legislature has passed an average of 682 bills each year. Lawmakers passed the most bills in 2003, with 1,307 bills becoming law. The lowest number of bills passed was in 2020 with only 370 when the session was cut short due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fiscal v. Non-fiscal Bill Trends



Source: Louisiana State Legislature

During non-fiscal sessions, lawmakers have passed almost twice as many bills as during fiscal sessions, according to data from the [Louisiana Legislature's website](#). In the last nine non-fiscal years, lawmakers averaged 916 bills passed, while in fiscal years, they passed an average of 471 bills.

The average percentage of bills passed in the last nine fiscal sessions is 44.5%, and the average percentage in the same number of non-fiscal sessions is 42.7%.

The 2023 regular session convenes on April 10 and must end by June 8. Lawmakers have until 5 p.m. on March 31 to pre-file bills.

The House and Senate asked for approval of a constitutional change in 2010 to move up the starting dates of each regular session while keeping the configuration and lengths of fiscal and non-fiscal sessions the same. Voters agreed to the amendment, and the earlier start date began in 2012. Sessions now start on the second Monday in March in even-numbered years and on the second Monday in April in odd-numbered years. Lawmakers are discussing whether to tweak those dates again, which would require another constitutional change.

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