LA students rally against budget cuts

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Around 2,000 students from across the state gathered on the steps of the Capitol on Wednesday, Feb. 24, at the Higher Education All Together rally to protest further budget cuts to higher education.

The H.E.A.T. rally featured music from the Southern University Marching Band and support from the Nicholls University cheerleaders and mascot, and the University of Louisiana at Monroe mascot.

Gov. John Bel Edwards took the podium early in the event and addressed the crowd of students and faculty with a special message.

Edwards said it was critical for the students to stand up and have their voices heard during the special session.

“I do not want to cut higher education. I do not want to end TOPS,” Edwards said. “I do not want for our universities, community and technical colleges to close.”


“I will fight for you as I have fought before for your future, for your education and for the state of Louisiana,” Smith said.

The Student Government Association at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette sponsored the trip to the rally for UL Lafayette students. The students were bused to the Capitol and joined the crowd with signs supporting their university.

Dorie Thompson, a UL Lafayette freshman majoring in environmental science, said she thinks it is important to take a stand and show elected officials

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what their constituents want.

“I’m here because I think it’s important that we have more Louisiana students attending college,” Thompson said, “and TOPS is one of the reasons that enables most of our students to go to public universities.”

Another UL Lafayette student, Kaleb Moore, a freshman majoring in pre-law, said he attended the rally because he supports Louisiana higher education and doesn’t think budget cuts are what is best for students.

The event was sponsored by the Louisiana Council of Student Body Presidents with help from the Board of Regents.