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COMMON CAUSE LOUISIANA RECORDS
(Mss. #4469)
Inventory

Compiled by
Bradley J. Wiles

Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections
Special Collections, Hill Memorial Library
Louisiana State University Libraries
Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University

2009

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Proper acknowledgement of LLMVC materials must be made in any resulting writing or publications. The correct form of citation for this manuscript group is given on the summary page. Copies of scholarly publications based on research in the Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections are welcomed.

SUMMARY

Size	24.0 linear ft.
Geographic Locations	Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas
Inclusive Dates	1972-1991
Bulk Dates	1980-1990
Languages	English
Summary	The Common Cause Louisiana Records consist of the administrative and subject files for the local and regional branches of a citizen advocacy organization. The collection includes correspondence, newsletters, reports, printed materials, ephemera, and other records documenting group structure and activities. There is also a considerable amount of material on political issues such as campaign finance reform, civil rights, nuclear disarmament, fair elections, wasteful government spending, and official corruption.
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Related Collections	Democratic State Central Committee of Louisiana Papers (1928-1980), Mss. 3760, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.
Citation	Common Cause Louisiana Records, Mss. 4469, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.
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HISTORICAL NOTE

Common Cause was founded in 1970 by John Gardner to encourage government accountability and openness through grassroots organizing and direct political lobbying. Gardner had been the United States Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare under U.S. President Lyndon Johnson and served as chairman of the National Urban Coalition. Though Common Cause began as an apparatus for citizen action, it soon was used to advocate against the Vietnam War and wasteful weapons programs and in favor of civil rights, campaign finance reform, and fair elections. Common Cause also became a leading advocate for advocacy itself, seeking to influence the ways lobbyists and other political action groups interacted with elected officials. The Louisiana branch of Common Cause was founded in the early 1970s along with several other branches in southern states as part of a national expansion of the parent organization, largely in reaction to the Watergate scandal and Richard M. Nixon's resignation. The Louisiana chapter was headquartered in Baton Rouge but maintained an active network throughout the state. In addition to keeping close watch over the elections and policy decisions of governors Edwin Edwards, David Treen, and Buddy Roemer, they also sought to address civil rights, political corruption, environment protection, and other hot-button issues under discussion at the Louisiana statehouse.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Common Cause Louisiana Records consists of national, regional, and state administrative records from a non-profit citizen lobbying organization. The collection spans the years 1972 to 1991, with the bulk from 1980 to 1990. The records include correspondence, reports, newsletters, press releases, membership directories, recruiting materials, and publications related to legislative and legal matters. The records contained within the subject files are on a variety of political and public-concern issues that were addressed by the Common Cause board of directors, committees, and activist networks at state, regional, and national level. The collection is divided into three series: National Administrative and Subject Files, Regional Administrative and Subject Files, and Louisiana Administrative and Subject Files. Each series is divided into subseries that reflect the approximate time span of the records and are arranged chronologically from earliest to latest. The individual files retain the names and alphabetical filing scheme used by the Common Cause Louisiana office.

SERIES LIST

Series I. National Administrative and Subject Files, 1975-1991

Subseries 1. 1970s to Early 1980s

Subseries 2. Middle 1980s

Subseries 3. Late 1980s to Early 1990s

Series II. Regional Administrative and Subject Files, 1980-1990

Subseries 1. Early to Middle 1980s

Subseries 2. Late 1980s to Early 1990s

Series III. Louisiana Administrative and Subject Files, 1972-1991

Subseries 1. 1970s to Early 1980s

Subseries 2. Middle 1980s

Subseries 3. Late 1980s to Early 1990s

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series I. National Administrative and Subject Files, 1975-1991

This series consists mostly of subject files relating to issues that Common Cause dealt with on a national level, including campaign finance reform, environmental legislation, government ethics and accountability, lobbying procedures, fair elections, defense spending, energy policy, nuclear arms control, civil rights, and political action committees. The records vary in format and include correspondence, published reports, printouts of legislation, court records, promotional pamphlets and flyers, newspaper clippings, position papers, and newsletters. The series contains only a small amount of material that reflects the structure and administration of the local and regional offices. Of note in this series are records on Strategic Defense Initiative Conference held in New Orleans in 1987 and extensive files on campaign finance reform, voter registration drives, and other Common Cause lobbying efforts in Louisiana.

Series II. Regional Administrative and Subject Files, 1980-1990

This series consists of subject and administrative files at the local, regional, and national level, but primarily focused on operations within Louisiana, Arkansas, and Mississippi. The records include financial and accounting documents, personnel files, budget statements, and correspondence between organization officers, committees, members, and constituency groups. Of note in this series are the records concerning the Common Cause national governing board and regional efforts at congressional reapportionment in 1980-1981.

Series III. Louisiana Administrative and Subject Files, 1972-1991

This series consists primarily of the administrative and subject files of the Common Cause Louisiana branch office. These records reflect the primary function of the local offices: to promote national causes at the local level and use the national organizational structure to address localized political issues. The records include membership and recruiting materials, budget and accounting information, board of director and annual meeting papers, press releases and newsletters, fundraising materials, published reports and studies, printouts of legislation and court cases, and correspondence relating to all aspects of operations. As in the national and regional instances, the Louisiana subject files emphasize Common Cause's advocacy for governmental ethics, campaign finance reform, fair elections, and civil rights. Of note in this series are records on Common Cause's opposition to U.S. President Ronald Reagan's nominations to the U.S. Supreme Court in the 1980s, support for Equal Rights Acts, the debate on sunset provisions for different types of legislation within Louisiana, and the funding of the gubernatorial bids for David C. Treen and Edwin W. Edwards. Also of note are records on telecommunications legislation, environmental protection, and energy policy.

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COMMON CAUSE LOUISIANA RECORDS

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IMCCL	20	1-3	Bork Nomination, 1987
		4	Brain Trust, 1984-1988
		5	Campaign '88, 1986-1988
		6	Campaign Finance-Bills, 1987
		7	Campaign Finance-Local (Baton Rouge), 1988
		8	Debt, 1988
		9	Elections, 1987-1988
		10-12	Ethics, 1987-1988
		13	Hale, Mary, 1987
		14	Hardin, Ed, 1987
		15	Initiative/Referendum, 1988
		16	Legislative Alerts, 1987-1988
		17	Lobby Disclosure, 1988
		18	Lobbying, 1987-1988
		19	Meet Candidates, 1988
		20	Miscellaneous, 1984-1989
		21	Public Meetings, 1987
		22	Public Record/Open Meetings, 1988
		23	Roemer, 1987-1988
		24-25	State Budget, 1987-1988
			Subseries 3. Late 1980s to Early 1990s
IMCCL	21	1	Annual Meeting, 1988
		2	Annual Meeting Poll, 1988
		3	Ballots, 1981-1989
		4	Board of Directors, 1988
		5	Budget-Proposed, 1988
		6	Common Cause Citizen's Telephone Network, 1988
		7	Contributors, 1988
		8	Correspondence, 1988
		9	Ethics, 1975-1989
		10	Fiscal Reform Forum, 1988
		11	Fundraising-General Membership Letter, 1988
		12	Fundraising-Large Giver Letter, 1988
		13	Government Alerts, 1988
		14	Insurance, 1983-1989

<u>Stack</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder(s)</u>	<u>Contents (with dates)</u>
			15-16	Lobbyist Disclosure Resources, 1979-1989
			17-18	Media-Louisiana Press Releases, 1983-1988
			19	Merit Selection, 1984-1989
			20	Minority Outreach, 1988
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			22	Open Meetings, 1981-1989
			23	Public Service Achievement Award, 1988
			24-25	Public Service Commission (PSC), 1989-1990
			26	Annual Meeting, 1989
			27	Board of Directors, 1989
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IMCCL		22	1	Comedy Act Fundraiser, 1989
			2	Contributions, 1989
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			5	Government, 1989
			6	Legislative Action Day, 1989
			7	Media-Press Releases, 1989
			8	Minority Outreach, 1989
			9	Opportunity Fund, 1989
			10	Public Forums-Judicial Selection, 1989
			11	Annual Meeting, 1990
			12	Annual Meeting Poll, 1990
			13	Board of Directors, 1988-1990
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			17	Government, 1990-1991
			18	Legislative Updates, 1983-1990
			19	Media-Press Releases, 1990
			20-21	Membership, 1990
			22	Minority Outreach, 1990
			23	Newsletters, 1990
			24	Paranoia to Perestroika, 1989-1990
			25	State Fundraising, 1990
			26	Telephone Network, 1987-1990
			27	Volunteer of the Year Award, 1990
			28	Annual Meeting, 1991
			29	Board of Directors, 1990-1991
			30	Budget, 1991
			31	Catering, 1991
			32	Correspondence, 1991

COMMON CAUSE LOUISIANA RECORDS

Mss. #4469

1972-1991

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, LSU LIBRARIES

<u>Stack</u>					
<u>Location</u>	<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder(s)</u>	<u>Contents (with dates)</u>		
IMCCL	23	33	Financial Report-National, 1990		
		1	Fundraising, 1991		
		2-3	Government, 1991		
		4	Issues Poll, 1991		
		5	Litigation, 1991		
		6	Media, 1991		
		7-8	Membership, 1991		
		9	Minority Outreach, 1991		
		10	Miscellaneous, 1991		
		11	Newsletters, 1991		
		12	Signature Cards, 1991		
		13	State Leadership Conference-National, 1991		
		14	State Office of Correspondence-National, 1991		
		15	State Offices Directory-National, 1991		
		16	Updates-National, 1991		
		17	Annual Membership Meeting, 1990-1991		
		18	Auction, 1982-1991		
		19	Board Meetings, 1990-1991		
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		23	Full Fundraisers, 1991		
		24	Fundraising, 1991		
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		27	Membership, 1991		
		28	Minority Outreach Conference, 1991		
		29	Newsletters, 1991		
		30	Press Releases, 1991		
		IMCCL	24	1-2	Reapportionment, 1987-1991
				3	Retirement, 1991
4	Sunset, 1991				
5	Term Limits, 1991				
6	Voter Bills, 1991				
7	Voter Contact Services, 1990				
8	Women's Issues, 1991				
9	Administrative Procedure Act, 1991				
10	Attorney General Opinion, 1991				
11	Bills, 1991				
12	Black Caucuses, 1991				
13-14	Campaign Finance, 1991				
15	Civil Rights, 1991				
16	Congressional Delegation, 1991				

COMMON CAUSE LOUISIANA RECORDS

1972-1991

Mss. #4469**SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, LSU LIBRARIES****Stack****Location****Box****Folder(s)****Contents (with dates)**

		17	Environment, 1991
		18	Ethics, 1990-1991
		19	Green, Doug, 1991
		20-21	Initiative/Referendum, 1989-1991
		22	Insurance Commission, 1991
		23	Interim Emergency Board, 1991
		24-25	Lobbyist Disclosure, 1989-1991
		26	Merit Selection, 1991
		27	Miscellaneous, 1991
		28	Open Meetings, 1991
		29	Presidential Election-Louisiana Democratic Party, 1991
		30	Public Affairs Research (PAR), 1977-1991
		31	Public Records, 1991
		32	Taft Seminar for Teachers, 1991