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Governor Bobby Jindal Sends Letter on Supplemental Funding to U.S. Senate

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Governor Bobby Jindal Sends Letter on Supplemental Funding to U.S. Senate

BATON ROUGE - Today, Governor Bobby Jindal sent a letter to the U.S. Senate encouraging them to support funding for Louisiana's levees and coastal restoration efforts in the supplemental they are expected to vote on tomorrow, Thursday. Governor Jindal encouraged them to support funding for Louisiana's needs in this supplemental bill, or propose it as its own legislation, or include it in another legislative instrument to ensure Louisiana's critical needs for levee protection and coastal restoration are met. The letter is included below:

Dear Leader Reid, Leader McConnell, Chairman Byrd and Ranking Member Cochran:

Our state appreciates the strong support that you have demonstrated for the Gulf Coast victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The emergency supplemental appropriations bill soon to be considered by the U.S. Senate attempts to fulfill an important commitment to Louisiana - the restoration of the 100-year level of hurricane protection by 2011. I support the inclusion of these funds in the final bill; however, I remain concerned that the goal of the funding is jeopardized by the unprecedented cost share required under the legislation.

As proposed in the House bill, the State of Louisiana would be faced with a \$1.8 billion cost share over the next three years for hurricane protection. This would result in a 4000 percent increase over the state's pre-Katrina contribution toward hurricane protection efforts. As we understand, Louisiana could be faced with paying up to \$1.1 billion in 2010 alone. This is nearly one-third of the state's discretionary budget. Burdening Louisiana with an unprecedented cost share in this compressed time frame will cause irreparable harm to our ongoing recovery efforts and stall our coastal restoration efforts.

The emergency supplemental bill also proposes to increase the overall percentage of funds provided by the state. Under the House proposal, Louisiana's cost share responsibilities would actually increase by over \$200 million above the cost share required under current law. Considering the extraordinary impact the 2005 hurricanes and the various aspects of recovery ongoing, it is alarming that Congress would choose to require a higher cost share at this time.

As you know, the Senate version of the emergency supplemental

allowed Louisiana the opportunity to pay its share of these important hurricane protection efforts over a longer period of time as allowed under current law. The Senate bill also used the traditional cost share requirements that reflect current law.

The Senate is right. Placing this extraordinary burden upon the backs of Louisiana citizens would set back our recovery for years. The large cuts to budgets, services and programs required to make \$1.8 billion available for levees would have a profound impact on Louisiana families across our state.

To be clear, Louisiana is willing to partner with the federal government on these important protection efforts. We are not asking for a waiver. The Senate bill requires our state to pay its share for hurricane protection under reasonable terms and in compliance with current law. I strongly urge you to support our Congressional delegation's efforts to retain the Senate provisions related to hurricane protection. If not possible to include this language in the supplemental, I encourage you to adopt this legislation on its own or through another legislative instrument.

Sincerely,

Governor Bobby Jindal

State of Louisiana Governor's Office

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The Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority's mandate is to develop, implement and enforce a comprehensive coastal protection and restoration master plan. For the first time in Louisiana's history, this single state authority will integrate coastal restoration and hurricane protection by marshalling the expertise and resources of the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Transportation and Development, and other state agencies, to speak with one clear voice for the future of Louisiana's coast. Working with federal, state and local political subdivisions, including levee districts, the CPRA will work to establish a safe and sustainable coast that will protect our communities, the nation's critical energy infrastructure, and our bountiful natural resources for generations to come. The CPRA of Louisiana was established by Act 8 of the 1st Extraordinary Session of 2005



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The Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) is the single state entity with the authority to focus development and implementation efforts for comprehensive coastal protection.