



CALCASIEU PARISH POLICE JURY

GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF CALCASIEU PARISH, LOUISIANA

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Vice President

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Parish Administrator

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District 1

Mike Smith
District 2

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District 3

Tony Guillory
District 4

Brian Abshire
District 5

Ron Hayes
District 6

Chris Landry
District 7

Guy Brame
District 8

Anthony Bartie
District 9

Tony Stelly
District 10

Roger Marcantel
District 11

Judd Bares
District 12

Joe Andrepont
District 13

Randy Burleigh
District 14

Tony Tramonte
District 15

April 9, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Enclosed please find a certified copy of a resolution which was adopted by the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury, in Regular Session convened on the 8th day of April, 2021, wherein the Police Jury respectfully requests your support of the Disaster Supplemental Appropriation to aid our region with recovery efforts as a result of Hurricanes Laura and Delta.

The recovery from these storms requires additional funding and support to address the significant unmet needs that persist despite the great efforts of our citizens and communities.

Your support in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Brian Abshire, President
Calcasieu Parish Police Jury

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable John Bel Edwards, Governor of the State of Louisiana
Members of the Louisiana Legislative Delegation
Members of the Louisiana Congressional Delegation

PARISH OF



CALCASIEU

State of Louisiana

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Calcasieu Parish and Southwest Louisiana were severely impacted by Hurricane Laura, which struck the area on August 27, 2020, as a significant Category 4 Hurricane, causing extensive and widespread destruction to residential, commercial and public assets of the communities; and

WHEREAS, a mere six weeks later, on October 9, 2020, Calcasieu Parish and Southwest Louisiana were again targeted by a hurricane from the Gulf of Mexico, Hurricane Delta, making landfall as a Category 2 storm and bringing devastating winds and rainfall to the already distressed region; and

WHEREAS, these two hurricanes caused extensive personal, emotional, and financial impacts across the region to the citizens who call Southwest Louisiana home, severely affecting thousands of homes, businesses, our workforce, both public and private infrastructure systems, the region's agricultural assets, and the areas numerous natural and cultural resources; and

WHEREAS, at the time when both storms struck the region, Southwest Louisiana and its citizens - much like the rest of our nation and world - was already responding to the global COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, in spite of all of these compounded challenges, the people of Calcasieu Parish and Southwest Louisiana rose to meet every adversity, preparing themselves and their families for all of the natural disasters in the face of the pandemic, quickly assessing damages following their impacts, lending helping hands to friends, families, neighbors, and strangers during this time of unprecedented need, and focusing in the immediate and intermediate aftermath of the storms on the rebuilding task at hand for our community; and

WHEREAS, The Honorable John Bel Edwards, Governor of the State of Louisiana, has communicated the unmet needs of Calcasieu Parish, Southwest Louisiana, and Louisiana to both the previous Presidential Administration, as well as the current Presidential Administration, respectfully requesting support for a disaster appropriations package to address the overwhelming recovery needs faced by so many thousands of citizens and families in Southwest Louisiana and across our state; and

WHEREAS, the request from Governor Edwards to the Joseph Biden Administration took into account the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Individual Assistance and Public Assistance being made available to our community following the devastating storms, and shows that, while critical and very much appreciated, this assistance will simply not be sufficient to allow the citizens of Southwest Louisiana to rebuild their homes and communities, nor will our local governments be able to sufficiently rebuild and harden damaged infrastructure in order to protect our community from future storms and natural disasters; and

WHEREAS, the request from Governor Edwards for a supplemental appropriation from Congress to aid our region and state was for \$3 billion in Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds to address the unmet needs of our communities, and was based on data available following the storms; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the CDBG-DR funds, Governor Edwards also requested that a disaster supplemental appropriation from Congress also consider Social Services Block Grant funding, Emergency Solutions Grant Program funding, FEMA Cost Share Reduction (this has been granted through FEMA), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers funding, and Natural Resource Conservation Service funding.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE POLICE JURY OF CALCASIEU PARISH, LOUISIANA, convened in Regular Session on the 8th day of April, 2021, as follows:

1. The members of the Police Jury, on behalf of all citizens of Calcasieu Parish, lend our full support to the disaster supplemental appropriations request from Governor Edwards to the administration of President Joseph Biden.
2. We call upon our entire Louisiana Legislative and Congressional Delegations to fully support and lend the full effort and influence of their office to work with the Biden Administration and fellow members of Congress toward a disaster appropriations package for our region that gives every consideration to the data provided by Governor Edwards' Administration towards addressing the significant unmet needs of our region and state.
3. While the people of Southwest Louisiana are some of the most resilient and brave citizens in the United States when faced with adversity, the recovery from these devastating storms requires additional funding and support to address the significant unmet needs that persist despite the tremendous efforts of our citizens and communities.
4. These unprecedented and unique circumstances of two severe hurricane events just six weeks apart, on top of an already devastating global pandemic, require that additional federal support be provided to Southwest Louisiana by our federal government.

BE IT FURTHER AND FINALLY RESOLVED that a certified copy of this resolution be forwarded to The Honorable John Bel Edwards, Governor of the State of Louisiana, and to all members of the Louisiana Legislative and Congressional Delegations.

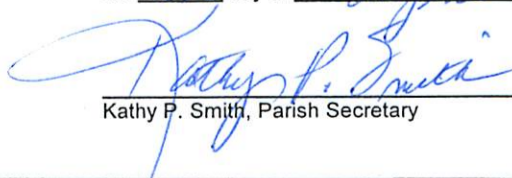
THUS DONE AND PASSED on the date above inscribed.

* * * * *

STATE OF LOUISIANA
PARISH OF CALCASIEU

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the original resolution as adopted by the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury in Regular Session convened on the 8th day of April, 2021.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, witness my official signature and the seal of the Parish of Calcasieu, Louisiana, on this the 9th day of April, 2021.


Kathy P. Smith, Parish Secretary

Office of the Governor
State of Louisiana

JOHN BEL EDWARDS
GOVERNOR



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January 22, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

It was a tremendous privilege and very memorable experience for me and my son to attend your inauguration this week. Your message of unity and hope were inspiring and your administration represents an opportunity for a fresh start, new energy and bold leadership to meet the challenges before us. In fact, I want to thank you for your quick action waiving the local match for the FEMA COVID-19 costs and implementing the 100 percent cost-share. This will greatly benefit Louisiana by relieving the heavy financial burden from our local governments.

As we briefly discussed during our conversation after your election, Louisiana was struck by three devastating hurricanes over the course of just two months:

Hurricane Laura, August 27, 2020 – Category 4

Hurricane Delta, October 9, 2020 – Category 2 (same geographic area as Hurricane Laura)

Hurricane Zeta, October 28, 2020 – Category 3

We are very grateful for the responsiveness of our federal partners as Louisiana rebuilds from these catastrophic hurricanes; however, the effective recovery from these storms requires additional federal support consistent with previous storms of similar magnitude and impact.

Please see the attached PowerPoint detailing the destruction caused by Hurricanes Laura and Delta.

These three hurricanes have been devastating for much of coastal Louisiana, more specifically: Cameron Parish and Calcasieu Parish, which is home to the community of Lake Charles. In addition, they had significant impacts across the entire state causing destruction to homes, businesses, and public infrastructure. As a result, all sixty-four parishes are now included in the Major Disaster Declaration. Many of these communities were in the midst of recovering from the first storm only to be hit again by a subsequent storm - all under the shadow of the COVID 19 Pandemic.

As in previous times of difficulty, Louisianans have once again risen to meet the challenges of rebuilding by helping their friends, families, neighbors and even total strangers begin the process of starting anew. While we do not doubt the ability of our citizens to recover, we need the help of the federal government to make that recovery complete. Thus, after careful consideration of Louisiana's needs, I respectfully request your support for a disaster appropriations package to address the significant recovery needs faced by thousands of Louisiana families and communities across the state.

The disaster appropriations package would focus primarily on **Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds**. The FEMA Individual Assistance funds that will be available for all three storms, while critical, will simply not be sufficient to allow our citizens to rebuild their homes and communities; and the Public Assistance funds to rebuild infrastructure will not be adequate to make our communities more resilient in the future. Without an appropriation of CDBG-DR funds, many neighborhoods and communities will not be able to recover. I ask that you request a supplemental appropriation from Congress to fill the enormous gap that will exist between the available funds and the costs to rebuild. Based on information available to date, the initial estimate is \$3 billion for the unmet needs of the citizens of Louisiana with respect to homeowner and rental housing, infrastructure and economic development.

In Louisiana, we clearly understand the federal focus on investing in mitigating damage from future disasters to shrink the need for future disaster recovery packages. In the appropriations for 2016-17 disasters, Congress included CDBG-Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) funds for just that purpose. In Louisiana, we are using those funds to institute fundamental changes in our statewide approach to flood risk reduction, an initiative that we believe will dramatically reduce damages from flooding in our state for decades to come. We are firm believers in the value of mitigation, and request that additional CDBG-MIT funding be included in the recovery package, as well.

In addition, other important areas of need and opportunity are provided here for consideration:

1. **Social Services Block Grant funding.** The widespread cumulative impact of COVID-19 along with multiple hurricanes in one year is unprecedented. The toll that these multiple stressors have taken on our people, our infrastructure, and our economy is immense. It has created a level of behavioral health needs that the state cannot meet with current resources. To assist in our recovery, I am seeking supplemental SSBG funding to meet the striking rise in behavioral health care, child welfare, community social services, child care, and household-related needs of residents in hurricane impacted communities across the state. This funding would increase access to evidence-based behavioral health services, provide enhanced crisis care coordination, promote access to health insurance coverage and care for impacted residents who qualify for Louisiana Medicaid, and stabilize the child welfare network and social services supports that aid in the complete recovery of citizens.
2. **Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) Program funding.** The catastrophic impact of these events on the housing sector, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, have resulted

in a range of significant housing and sheltering needs. ESG funding provides critical assistance to the most vulnerable populations that cannot be effectively served with other programs or funding opportunities. Without this funding, many of these families will face the reality of homelessness and further burden the social service network that is already challenged by the impacts of these events.

3. **FEMA Cost Share Reduction.** Consistent with your action on COVID-19 funding, granting a reduction for the 25% cost share for communities across the state for these disasters would provide an immediate relief to these communities. The previous administration provided a 30 day waiver of the cost share under sections 403 and 407 of the Stafford Act for debris removal and emergency protective measures for Hurricane Laura (DR-4559), which has been very helpful. To maximize the benefit of this waiver, I am requesting the flexibility to allow each eligible entity to establish their own waiver period. Further, I am asking that the period of this waiver be extended to 45 days consistent with the approval provided for the State of Florida for Hurricane Michael (DR-4399)¹. This flexibility will ensure every eligible entity is helped by this waiver, as there is a significant difference in the timing of costs across the impacted area exacerbated by the interruption of Hurricane Laura recovery efforts triggered by the response to Hurricane Delta. This flexibility can be implemented while also minimizing the administrative burden of state and federal partners.
4. **United States Army Corps of Engineers funding.** The Southwest Coastal Louisiana Study is the first Federally-authorized feasibility-level study with the dual purpose of hurricane and storm damage risk reduction, through the National Economic Development plan, and coastal restoration through the National Ecosystem Restoration plan for the southwest Louisiana parishes of Cameron, Calcasieu and Vermilion. We request federal investment for the Southwest Coastal project, which has been thoroughly studied by the US Army Corps of Engineers and the State of Louisiana and is ready for implementation. Additionally, the federal protection project on Grand Isle was severely impacted during multiple tropical events resulting in failure of the dune as a result of Hurricane Zeta. We ask that federal funding be made available to the US Army Corps of Engineers to address the chronic erosion on the west end of the Grand Isle & Vicinity Project.
5. **Natural Resource Conservation Service funding.** Funding for the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program and the Emergency Watershed Protection – Floodplain Easement Program (EWP-FPE) is needed to assist with critical projects to reduce future losses and address critical impacts from these storms not covered by other agencies or authorities. The cumulative impact of multiple storms has resulted in trees and other debris clogging stream channels increasing the flood risk in the future rainfall events. This funding has been very helpful for Louisiana communities in the recovery from

¹ <https://www.fema.gov/disaster-federal-register-notice/amendment-no-8-77>

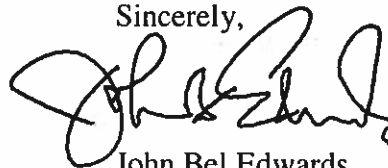
The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
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previous disasters and I am requesting support for funding to address issues caused by Laura, Delta, and Zeta.

The people of Louisiana remain strong and resilient in the face of the compounding impact of these storms. The recovery from these storms requires additional funding and support to address the significant unmet needs that persist despite the great efforts of our citizens and communities. Recovery is always slow and difficult, but these unique circumstances require additional federal support. I ask for your favorable consideration of these requests and that you encourage your administration to continue its strong support for Louisiana's recovery.

Finally, although we have major challenges to address, we are extremely optimistic about the future under your outstanding leadership and experience. We look forward to working with you and your administration on these and other challenges that face our State and Country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Bel Edwards". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "B".

John Bel Edwards
Governor

cc: U.S. Senator William G. "Bill" Cassidy
U.S. Senator John Kennedy
U.S. Congressman Stephen J. Scalise
U.S. Congressman G. Clay Higgins
U.S. Congressman J. Michael "Mike" Johnson
U.S. Congressman Garret N. Graves