



6133 Hwy. 311  
Houma, LA 70360

Phone: (985) 876-5600  
Fax: (985) 876-5611

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[www.houmachamber.com](http://www.houmachamber.com)

June 2, 2008

Mr. Garret Graves  
Chair, Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority  
P.O. Box 44027  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-4027

Dear Mr. Graves,

The Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce is a nearly 800-member business association and has historically been a proponent of coastal restoration. The Chamber has partnered with Restore or Retreat and over 200 diverse business and individuals to form a grass-roots effort to aggressively identify, expedite, and implement a long-term, large scale restoration solution to sustain this irreplaceable region. The Chamber of Commerce would like to respectfully submit the following comments regarding allocated \$300 million of surplus funds by the State of Louisiana to be used for implementation of projects consistent with the State's Comprehensive Master Plan and the Urgent Early Action Items of the State's 2009 Annual Plan.

While every project listed in the Master Plan is important, because of the size and economics of our region, we believe at least 1/3 or \$100 million of the surplus funds should be directed toward projects in the Barataria and Terrebonne Basins.

The Houma Metropolitan Statistical Area (Terrebonne and Lafourche Parishes) began to see tremendous growth not after the hurricanes of 2005, but dating back to the Deep Water Royalty Relief Act of the 1990s. Our area is the fastest growing in the state, with the lowest unemployment, nearly 3% below the national average. A recent report conducted by Loren Scott and Associates for the Greater Lafourche Port Commission indicates that \$1.5 billion of business sales in 2006 are linked to Port Fourchon alone, and its overall impact of the surrounding communities even greater. With the price of oil per barrel almost twice that of 2006, the impact can only be greater and even more far-reaching.

At the same time, no region in the state, country or anywhere else in the world is experiencing the same rate of land loss that we are. Unfortunately, following the 2005 hurricane season, our region has not seen its share of federal protection and restoration dollars despite the land loss rates and economic vitality.

**The Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce would like to respectfully request that surplus funds be allocated to this region's unmet hurricane needs including Morganza to the Gulf (\$48 million) and Larose to Golden Meadow (\$29 million) projects. Additionally, we request that surplus funds be allocated to this region's unmet coastal restoration needs including the Mississippi River reintroduction into Bayou Lafourche (\$8.3 million), Beneficial use of Dredge Material (\$30 million) and Pipeline Conveyance of Sediment (\$50 million) projects.**

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The Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce, the 800 businesses it represents and the thousands of individuals living and working in Terrebonne Parish respectfully advocate for funding for such an important area as the Barataria and Terrebonne Basins. These basins provide valuable resources for the nation, including 18% of the nation's oil production, 24% of the nation's natural gas production, 20,000 miles of pipelines and infrastructure, passage of 500 million tons of waterborne cargo, most bountiful commercial fisheries in the lower 48 states and valuable wetland protection for over half of the state's population. The citizens of this area have long been supportive and proactive in fighting to protect their community and culture, and we are asking the same of you.

Sincerely,

Lisa Schilling  
2008 Chairman of the Board

Drake Pothier, IOM  
President & CEO