

Regular Session, 2014

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 49

BY REPRESENTATIVE CHAMPAGNE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority to create a body composed of officials from coastal parishes, employees or board members of the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, and other members that may be necessary for the purpose of facilitating the development of the coastal parishes' land use plans.

WHEREAS, Louisiana's coastline is comprised of 3.5 million acres of coastal wetlands that represents approximately forty percent of all the coastal wetlands in the continental United States; and

WHEREAS, on April 20, 2010, an explosion occurred on the mobile offshore drilling unit Deepwater Horizon which resulted in the fire that eventually sank the rig, killing eleven crewmen, and destroying Louisiana's delicate coast and industries that rely on the coast with an estimated 4.1 million barrels of oil released over an eighty-seven day period from the Macondo well five thousand feet below on the ocean bottom; and

WHEREAS, this incident has had a long-lasting impact on the state's natural resources, including land, water, fish, wildlife, fowl, and other biota, and likewise on the livelihoods of Louisiana's citizens living along the coast; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Water Pollution Control Act also known as the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. 1321, provides for administrative and civil penalties for parties responsible for unauthorized discharge of pollutants into United States waters as occurred during the Deepwater Horizon disaster; and

WHEREAS, these fines estimated between \$5.4 billion and \$21.1 billion would ordinarily be deposited into the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund pursuant to the Clean Water Act; however, congress passed the Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012 (RESTORE) that requires eighty percent of the fines to be deposited into the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund (Trust Fund)

for restoration efforts in the five coastal states damaged by the spill: Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas; and

WHEREAS, the monies from the Trust Fund will be principally divided into three funding mechanisms, the Direct Component that evenly distributes thirty-five percent to the five affected states; the Comprehensive Plan Component that directs thirty percent to the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council to implement a comprehensive Gulf Coast wide recovery plan; and the Spill Impact Component that distributes thirty percent to the affected states based upon a formula calculated on the miles of coastline affected by the oil spill, distance from Deepwater Horizon, and the average 2010 population; and

WHEREAS, thirty percent of Louisiana's Direct Component share will be allocated directly to coastal parishes; and

WHEREAS, the rules proposed by the United States Department of Treasury, which administers the Trust Fund, requires a parish, prior to receiving any funds, to submit a land use plan to the governor that is consistent with, or complementary to, the most recent version of the state's Coastal Master Plan approved by the legislature; and

WHEREAS, the coastal parishes, the state, and our coastal ecosystem as a whole would benefit from developing the coastal parishes' land use plan based on discussions and participation in a forum of coastal parish officials, employees and board members of the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority to create a body composed of officials from coastal parishes, employees or board members of the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, and other members that may be necessary for the purpose of facilitating the development of the coastal parishes' land use plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the executive director of the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority.

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE