

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 59

BY SENATOR BARROW

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To memorialize the Congress of the United States to reevaluate and redraw flood-risk maps and systems upon fifty percent completion of the Comite River Diversion Canal Project and decrease insurance rates based on mitigation progress in Louisiana.

WHEREAS, the Comite River Diversion Canal Project was developed to redirect excess flood water from the Comite River Basin toward the Mississippi River in order to reduce future flood damage; and

WHEREAS, during the August 2016 flood of record within the basin, approximately 109,000 homes flooded, of which 79,000 homes were located in East Baton Rouge Parish and Livingston Parish. Flood damages were estimated at \$3.8 billion in residential property damage with \$2.3 billion occurring in East Baton Rouge Parish and Livingston Parish; and

WHEREAS, following the 2016 flood, the project received major federal funding and advanced into active construction, including work on the diversion channel, control structures, bridges, and related infrastructure and has made measurable progress toward completion, representing a significant step toward long-term flood risk reduction for communities in and around East Baton Rouge Parish; and

WHEREAS, flood risk is a major factor in increased insurance costs in Louisiana, resulting in higher premiums, financial burdens on families, reduced housing affordability, and impaired economic growth in communities across this state; and

WHEREAS, the Comite River Diversion Canal Project in southeastern Louisiana is a long-standing federal and state flood mitigation project designed to reduce flood damages for residents and property owners; and

WHEREAS, despite significant progress toward long-term flood risk reduction and completion of the project since 2016, Louisiana homeowners, renters, farmers, and businesses continue to face severe increases in property and flood insurance premiums; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has indicated once the project is fifty percent completed, they can begin redrawing flood maps in a way that shows the project is finished, resulting in lowered insurance rates for tens of thousands of people who live within the Basin; and

WHEREAS, it has been publicly reported that FEMA estimates that the fifty percent threshold for project completion will be met in the summer of 2027, and by 2028 should eliminate or reduce flood insurance premiums in advance of the project being completed; and

WHEREAS, recognition of substantial completion benchmarks, including approximately fifty percent completion of the Comite River Diversion Canal Project, should support updated risk modeling, mitigation recognition, improved affordability, and future premium relief.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby memorialize the Congress of the United States to take necessary action to stabilize and reduce insurance costs for Louisiana residents and businesses impacted by flood risk, including through federal recognition of measurable flood-risk reduction associated with major mitigation infrastructure.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the secretary of the United States Senate and the clerk of the United States House of Representatives and to each member of the Louisiana delegation of the United States Congress.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES