

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 8, 2018

The Honorable R.D. James
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)
108 Army Pentagon
Room 3E446
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Lieutenant General Todd Semonite
Chief of Engineers
Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20314-1000

Dear Secretary James and LTG Semonite,

We are writing to you today concerning the restoration of full funding for the Freshwater Bayou Lock. As you know, the Freshwater Bayou Lock provides access from the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway and Intracoastal City for the offshore oil supply and commercial fishing industries. Additionally, the lock serves as a mechanism for salinity control of the Mermentau Basin.

Freshwater Bayou Lock plays a critical role in our nation's commerce, typically ranking in the top 10 nationwide in terms of commercial lockages. However, proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 funding for lock operations has been cut from \$1.4 million to \$759 thousand. \$759 thousand is an insufficient amount to keep the Freshwater Bayou Lock operational year around and to fund all employee salaries. Without restoration of full funding Freshwater Bayou Lock will not be able to meet the level of service mandated by the Inland Marine Transportation Systems (IMTS) standards adopted Corps-wide and will be forced to drastically reduce its hours of operations.

Such a reduction in operations will not only negatively impact the economy, it will also disrupt the important national security mission of the United States Coast Guard. With the current international terror threats facing our nation, as well as the continued flow of narcotics into our borders, the negation of any disruption of the Coast Guard's activities in the Gulf of Mexico should be made a top priority for the Administration and Congress.

We look forward to continuing working with you on remedying this issue and ensuring that the Freshwater Bayou Lock is able to continue operating within its normal parameters.

Respectfully,

Bill Cassidy, M.D.

Bill Cassidy, M.D.
United States Senator

John Kennedy

John Kennedy
United States Senator

Clay Higgins

Clay Higgins
United States Congressman

Cc:

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