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3RD DISTRICT, LOUISIANA

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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READINESS

May 2, 2025

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I request funding for the Southwest Louisiana Living Shoreline, Habitat Restoration, and Public Access Initiative in fiscal year 2026. The entity to receive funding for this project is the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, located at 150 Terrace Avenue, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802. The funding would be used to protect and restore up to 1 mile of oyster reef and vulnerable marsh habitat along Highway 27 in Lake Calcasieu, along the Sabine National Wildlife Refuge. The project is an appropriate use of taxpayer funds because this proposal meets the objectives described in the CZMA resource management improvement grants (16 U.S. Code § 1455a). Specifically, the shoreline protection through oyster reef restoration aspects contributes to the CZMA objective for the “preservation or restoration” of areas because of their conservation, recreational, ecological, and other values and restoring and enhancing shellfish production.” Additionally, the proposed kayak boat launch in Lake Charles meets multiple CZMA objectives by providing “access... to other public coastal areas and to coastal waters” and facilitating the “redevelopment of... underutilized urban waterfronts.”

The proposal also meets CZMA’s Coastal Zone Enhancement Objective (16 U.S. Code § 1456b) by protecting, restoring, and enhancing the existing coastal wetlands base and creating new coastal wetlands, as well as by attaining increased opportunity for public access, taking into account current and future public access needs, to coastal areas of recreational, historical, aesthetic, ecological, or cultural value. The benefits to Louisiana are substantial. The proposal would construct living shorelines in key coastal area to slow shoreline erosion, restore marsh, and support fisheries. Similar projects have been scientifically proven to provide approximately 50% less coastal erosion than areas without the shoreline restoration measures. The proposal would also provide urban access to coastal ecosystems and engage the public in volunteer plantings and generating key natural materials for additional coastal restoration. These projects are consistent with fulfilling Louisiana’s 2023 Coastal Master Plan.

The project has a Federal nexus because the funding provided is for purposes authorized by the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. § 1451 et seq.).

I certify that I have no financial interest in this project, and neither does anyone in my immediate family.

Respectfully,

Clay Higgins
Member of Congress