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LOUISIANA

DEPUTY WHIP

Armed Services

Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

Environment and Public Works

Small Business and Entrepreneurship

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 17, 2009

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Billy Nungesser
President, Plaquemines Parish
8056 Highway 23, Suite 200
Belle Chasse, Louisiana 70037

Dear President Nungesser:

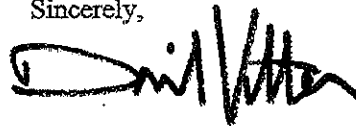
I am writing to you in reference to the critical issue of hurricane protection for the community of Jesuit Bend. Hurricane recovery and protection for the citizens and businesses of Louisiana continue to be top priorities for me. I have made known my frustration to federal agencies concerning delays and inflexibilities concerning projects in many communities, including Jesuit Bend.

Legislatively, for the Jesuit Bend area, I have attempted special authorization to include this area south of Oakville in the West Bank and Vicinity (WBV) Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System. Such authorization would raise the levee protection around Jesuit Bend to 100-year storm level and would include the structures in the programmatic environmental impact statement. I will continue to search for other authorization vehicles through my position on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. I will still seek to include the Jesuit Bend incorporation, along with several other critical initiatives, in the next Water Resources and Development Act, which I hope to be passed in 2010.

I also am pursuing higher storm level protection for Jesuit Bend under the current authorization, which is the New Orleans to Venice Hurricane Protection Project. I hope to have the Corps of Engineers partner with your Parish and the state to raise the protection to a level comparable with WBV. I am also urging the Corps to find ways to significantly expedite the environmental analysis; several years is too long and unacceptable! I know that your staff and consultants have considerable technical knowledge of the Corps levee design and project approval process; my staff will continue to draw on their expertise!

I will be meeting with the Corps district and division commanders, COL Lee and BG Walsh, next Wednesday. I hope you or your staff can join us or call in as we discuss this critical issue. I remain committed to implementing the best protection as quickly as possible for the citizens of Jesuit Bend!

Sincerely,



David Vitter
United States Senate

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