

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1804

June 15, 2010

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As you prepare to address the nation tonight regarding the ecological and economic disaster still unfolding in the Gulf of Mexico, you should remember that the coast of Louisiana has been in a state of crisis for decades before this horrific incident. I hope you take this opportunity to recommend a long-term strategy for the restoration and protection of our fragile coast.

This unique and culturally rich delta drains 40 percent of the continental United States and is eroding at a rate of 25 to 35 square miles of wetlands per year – or a football field every 38 minutes. The loss of life and property that occurred as a result of hurricanes Katrina and Rita were exacerbated by the vulnerable coastal wetlands and lack of coastal flood protection measures. In the face of the current oil disaster in the Gulf, the consequences of federal inaction are grave. But the consequence of continued inaction by the Federal government in restoring and protecting coastal Louisiana would deal a lasting blow to our communities, economy and way of life.

In the months prior to BP disaster, I convened a broad cross-section of stakeholders and experts to discuss the future protection, restoration and conservation of coastal Louisiana. The group focused on reducing bureaucratic obstacles and delays to implementing ecosystem restoration and flood control projects. The conclusion we reached is that we must have an **immediate and dedicated stream of revenue** for the restoration of the coast and establishment of a **new model for governance**, planning, and applied science.

I urge you to review the attached proposal for a new approach to our decades-long struggle to protect and restore coastal Louisiana, and support accelerating the sharing of oil and gas revenues from the outer continental shelf with coastal producing states. Tonight's speech is the perfect opportunity to deliver this powerful message to the Gulf Coast and nation. Your Administration took an important first step when you heeded my call for more coordination among Federal agencies by establishing the White House-led Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Working Group. I commend you for this effort, as their work has been an essential step towards developing a path forward. I hope you take this recommendation as an urgent call to action for the future of coastal Louisiana.

Respectfully,



Mary L. Landrieu
United States Senator