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GOVERNOR

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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

May 13, 2011

The Honorable Gary Locke
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
14th and Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Mr. Secretary:

As rising waters in the Mississippi River approach communities along the river's banks, the State of Louisiana is preparing for flood conditions in the lower Mississippi River that will accompany a scheduled opening of the Bonnet Carré Spillway. I am requesting that you activate the necessary federal disaster declaration clauses in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as well as the applicable clauses that shall prompt support from the Economic Development Administration (EDA). These actions would result in the declaration of a commercial fisheries failure for Louisiana and make available the crucial support our communities and our fisheries industry will need to recover.

The last six years have presented immense challenges to Louisiana's coastal fisheries and the communities that are supported by them. From 2005 through 2010, we experienced hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav and Ike, and, in 2010, the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. Last year's oil spill not only negated so much of the progress our fisheries were able to make in recovery from the previous four major hurricanes, but it also decimated much of the market for our seafood around the globe. With fisheries like Louisiana oysters seeing a 55.9 percent reduction in production from 2009 to 2010, it is evident that the commercial fisheries industries and the residents in Louisiana who depend upon them have major challenges to overcome. These same communities will now face flood waters of record proportions; it is crucial that we proactively make assistance programs available.

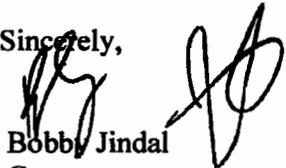
In addition to the commercial and recreational fisheries industries, which are responsible for generating approximately \$3 billion in Louisiana annually, our maritime and energy

industries are also major economic drivers in Louisiana. Each of these industries plays a vital role in the Gulf Coast economy and the nation's economic picture.

The application of a federal fisheries disaster, fisheries disaster assistance and the financial support of the EDA will help to get our small businesses, families and their communities back on their feet as quickly as possible. EDA assistance means that associated business like the bait and tackle shops, restaurants, fisheries processors and marinas along the coast will have access to assistance that can get them back to contributing to the overall economic success of the Gulf Coast.

We look forward to a swift response from your office and the rapid application of appropriate federal disaster declarations so that we may assure residents throughout Louisiana and along our coast that as the flood waters recede, we may begin work to restore our fisheries, our coastal businesses and the communities dependent upon their success.

Sincerely,


Bobby Jindal
Governor