



NEWS RELEASE

LOUISIANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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State Representative Simone Champagne to seek constitutional amendment to protect coastal restoration monies

BATON ROUGE – Representative Simone Champagne (R-Jeanerette) is seeking a constitutional amendment to ensure fines imposed under the federal Clean Water Act following the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, go directly toward protecting Louisiana’s coast.

Champagne’s bill (HB 148) creates a constitutional amendment stating that any fines paid by oil company BP as penalties under the Clean Water Act should be deposited in Louisiana’s Coastal Protection and Restoration Fund.

“I want to ensure we preserve our rich heritage, property value and opportunities of the coast,” Champagne said, “Our hard-working residents should not have to move out due to preventable erosion.”

Although the legislature previously added Champagne’s provision to state law, she said the law can be changed with a simple majority vote of the legislature.

Constitutional amendments, by comparison, require a majority of two-thirds of the legislature, then a state-wide vote by the general public.

“Louisiana’s coast not only brings thousands of much needed jobs but defines our culture, resources, and identity as a gulf state. We are losing more and more of our coastline each year, and I want to ensure that we are doing everything we can as

legislators to protect it.” Champagne said. “This bill would give these funds higher constitutional protection and give our state’s citizens a chance to state their opinion.”

Champagne will present her bill to the House Appropriations Committee on Monday.

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