



NEWS RELEASE

LOUISIANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Coastal constitutional amendment passes House unanimously

BATON ROUGE – With overwhelming help from the House, Representative Simone Champagne (R-Jeanerette) is closer to offering 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.

“Clearly my colleagues in the House believe we should preserve our rich heritage, property value and opportunities of the coast,” Champagne said, “Our hard-working residents should not have to move away 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 brings thousands of much needed jobs and 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 do 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’s bill now moves to the Senate for debate.

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