

Lake Charles Mtg 2-22-11  
Congress



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February 17, 2011

Senator Robert W. “Bob” Kostelka,  
Chair, Senate and Governmental Affairs  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 94183  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Representative Richard “Rick” Gallot, Jr.,  
Chair, House and Governmental Affairs  
State Capitol  
P.O. Box 94062  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

**Re: Impact of Redistricting on Terrebonne and Lafourche Parishes**

Dear Senator Kostelka and Representative Gallot:

South Central Industrial Association (SCIA) is a multi-parish industrial organization composed of more than 200 member companies representing over 50,000 employees; committed to the communities we serve. We believe it is critical for the state to keep the entire parishes of Lafourche and Terrebonne together in one congressional district, comprised of mostly coastal parishes.

SCIA recognizes the importance of the 2010 Census and its impact on how Louisiana and its residents will be represented in Congress and within our own state districts. The Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) is the fifth largest in the state, ahead of Lake Charles and Monroe. With a population of 200,000 plus residents, Terrebonne and Lafourche consistently have the lowest unemployment in the state. This huge economic engine is the result of the substantial business relationships between the two parishes, including many companies maintaining facilities in both parishes.

An additional boost to the local economy is Port Fourchon, the premier oil and gas port for the Gulf of Mexico, especially deepwater exploration and development, located in Lafourche Parish. Terrebonne Parish, the Port of Terrebonne and its businesses work closely with Port Fourchon to provide the necessary support services and ensure the economic engines are continually generating activity for our area. To continue to support this engine and assist with our workforce development needs, the federal workforce investment board is federally mandated to integrate Terrebonne and Lafourche parishes.

Lafourche and Terrebonne is also linked through its federally sanctioned national estuary program – the Barataria – Terrebonne National Estuary, which binds our irreplaceable region through its ecology. The shared interests of Terrebonne and Lafourche Parishes are also visibly evident through its infrastructure projects including levee protection and coastal restoration, with several regional entities including levee districts and non-profit organizations working in tandem on both issues. In addition to coastal protection, major infrastructure projects like the improvements to Louisiana Highway 1, the only access to and from Port Fourchon, not only serve our region, but our state and nation as well.

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In the education arena, the two parishes are the model for setting high standards for regional high education partnerships through the relationship between Nicholls State University in Thibodaux and Fletcher Technical Community College in Houma.

And finally, the shared cultural issue of our Native American population of 18,000 members has a rich history of consolidation between the two parishes. Having been uprooted for centuries, they have finely found a home in the bayous of Terrebonne and Lafourche.

In conclusion, dividing Lafourche and Terrebonne parishes into separate congressional districts when we are working together on common problems and emerging opportunities would be counterproductive. Lafourche and Terrebonne need a single congressman who will understand our joint, interlocking issues and who will have both parishes' common interests in mind.

Sincerely,



Tony Alford  
SCIA President