

# **LOUISIANA LEGISLATURE**

## ***NEWS RELEASE***

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### **2008 NATIONAL CONFERENCE TO BRING MUCH NEEDED BOOST TO STATE/NEW ORLEANS ECONOMY**

#### **Issues Summit Offers Opportunity to Focus the Nation's Attention on Hurricane Recovery Efforts**

The 2008 National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) Issues Summit is coming to New Orleans. The Louisiana-hosted conference is expected to bring nearly 10,000 state legislators, their families, staff, and others to the Crescent City for five days next July.

NCSL's annual meeting brings together those involved in policymaking and the legislative process from every state in the nation, as well as countries around the world. The meeting provides the opportunity to discuss common problems and possible solutions for the challenges faced by states. Issues important to all lawmakers such as education, health care, state budgets, homeland security, infrastructure, the environment, and energy are showcased. The conference also attracts leading experts in these fields as speakers, moderators, and participants.

An added bonus to the exchange of ideas is the economic benefit to a state's economy. This year's meeting in Boston attracted more than 9000 attendees. With more than 24,000 hotel nights sold, the Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau estimates that more than \$20 million in tourism dollars will be realized.

In the past, NCSL annual meetings held in New Orleans, as well as other legislative conferences, have always surpassed the prior year's attendance records of other states. Even matching this year's numbers will be a tremendous boost to the state's post-Katrina tourism industry.

"The road back from hurricanes Katrina and Rita has been and continues to be a difficult one." said House Speaker Joe Salter. "This conference is a tremendous opportunity to show the country that New Orleans and Louisiana are open for business and that our people are determined to come back better than ever."

(more)

## Add one – 2008 National Conference

Senate President Don Hines agreed. “Hosting a conference of this magnitude gives our state the opportunity to focus the nation’s attention on coastal Louisiana’s recovery efforts and our need for the nation’s continued support. If we don’t promote ourselves, no one else will. I think we learned that after the storms.”

A delegation of Louisiana lawmakers is attending this year’s summit in Boston to promote the New Orleans conference. Joined by Lieutenant Governor Mitch Landrieu, the state hosted a Louisiana hospitality event highlighting the state’s culture and cuisine to encourage attendance at next year’s New Orleans’ summit. With the help of New Orleans area businesses, most of the more than 9000 delegates enjoyed Louisiana’s hospitality.

NCSL recently announced the New Orleans Summit will be held July 20-25, 2008.

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