

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 7

BY SENATORS CHABERT, ALARIO, ALLAIN, APPEL, CLAITOR, CORTEZ, DONAHUE, ERDEY, FANNIN, GATTI, HEWITT, JOHNS, LAMBERT, LONG, LUNEAU, MARTINY, MILKOVICH, MILLS, MIZELL, MORRISH, PEACOCK, PERRY, RISER, GARY SMITH, JOHN SMITH, THOMPSON, WALSWORTH, WARD AND WHITE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To memorialize the Congress of the United States to maintain the Outer Continental Shelf revenue sharing arrangement passed under the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006.

WHEREAS, the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 (GOMESA) provides for the sharing of qualified Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) revenues to Gulf Coast states and their political subdivisions that host energy production in order to help mitigate the demands associated with that production on infrastructure and natural resources; and

WHEREAS, GOMESA stipulates that funds can only be used for the purposes of coastal protection including conservation, restoration, hurricane protection, the mitigation of damage to wildlife and natural resources, and the mitigation of effects from Outer Continental Shelf activities through onshore infrastructure projects, and associated administrative costs; and

WHEREAS, in 2006, the people of Louisiana voted overwhelmingly to constitutionally dedicate the revenues received through GOMESA to the Coastal Protection and Restoration Fund for the purposes of coastal wetlands conservation, coastal restoration, hurricane protection, or infrastructure directly impacted by coastal wetland losses; and

WHEREAS, revenues received by Louisiana and its eligible coastal parishes from 2009 to 2015 under phase one of GOMESA provided only \$11.5 million to the state, but phase two is estimated to generate more than ten times as much revenue each year for coastal projects; and

WHEREAS, GOMESA revenues have long been seen as a crucial, reliable and recurring revenue stream to support Louisiana's coastal protection and restoration work; and

WHEREAS, since 2007, Louisiana has created a framework for its coastal protection and restoration program and set the national standard for utilizing world-class science and engineering and public outreach to meet the challenges of a vanishing coast through its Comprehensive Master Plan for a Sustainable Coast (Coastal Master Plan); and

WHEREAS, the 2012 Coastal Master Plan further evolved Louisiana's approach to coastal protection and restoration with the prioritization of projects in a resource-constrained funding and physical environment; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's land loss crisis demands a robust and integrated coastal protection and restoration program that operates effectively and urgently for the safety, livelihood, culture, and enjoyment of its people; and

WHEREAS, the entire United States derives fantastic benefit from the natural assets of coastal Louisiana including its energy resources, the commerce and connections provided by its ports and waterways, its seafood production, and many other invaluable ecosystem services; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's coastline has already lost twenty-five percent of its 1932 land area and without the implementation of large scale restoration projects it could lose an additional 1,750 square miles of land at the end of fifty years; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana has a science-based plan to meet these challenges that include massive public investments in the restoration of America's largest river delta, structural protection where necessary, and an extensive program to floodproof, elevate, and voluntarily acquire homes and businesses at greatest risk of flooding; and

WHEREAS, Louisiana aims to pioneer the engineered replication of natural processes such as the construction of sediment diversions off of the Mississippi River, and develop other expertise that can be exported around the globe to other cities, states, and countries adapting to climate change; and

WHEREAS, by maintaining GOMESA, Congress can follow through on a promise nearly ten years old, support Louisiana's efforts to provide for a sustainable coast, help to protect and maintain nationally significant economic and natural resources, and help reduce federal liabilities like insured properties in the National Flood Insurance Program and future hurricane disaster payouts.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana memorializes the Congress of the United States to maintain the Outer Continental Shelf revenue sharing arrangements established under the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act of 2006 for the creation of a recurring funding stream in support of Louisiana's coastal program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution shall be transmitted to the secretary of the United States Senate and the clerk of the United States House of Representatives and to each member of the Louisiana delegation to the United States Congress.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES