State of Louisiana

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

PROCLAMATION NO. 1 JBE 2016

EXTENSION OF STATE OF EMERGENCY – THREAT OF SUBSIDENCE, SUBSURFACE INSTABILITY, AND PRESENCE OF NATURAL GAS IN BAYOU CORNE COMMUNITY AREA

WHEREAS, Proclamation No. 82 BJ 2012 was issued on Friday, August 3, 2012, declared a state of emergency in the Parish of Assumption, due to the threat of subsidence and subsurface instability that threatens the lives and property of the citizens of this State;

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Homeland Security and Emergency Assistance and Disaster Act, R.S. 29:721 *et seq.*, confers upon the Governor of the State of Louisiana emergency powers to deal with emergencies and disasters, including those caused by fire, flood, earthquake or other natural or manmade causes, in order to ensure that preparations of this state will be adequate to deal with such emergencies or disasters and to preserve the lives and property of the people of the State of Louisiana;

WHEREAS, when the Governor determines that a disaster or emergency has occurred, or the threat thereof is imminent, R.S. 29:724(B)(1) empowers the Governor to declare a state of emergency by executive order or proclamation, or both;

WHEREAS, local, state, and federal agencies began monitoring and investigating unexplained bubbling and subsurface seismic activity occurring in the vicinity of Bayou Corne in Assumption Parish in June of 2012, and continue to do so;

WHEREAS, on Thursday August 2, 2012, an area of wooded swamp located in this area began to subside, and continues to subside;

WHEREAS, on Friday August 3, 2012, in response to this subsidence, Commissioner of Conservation, James H. Welsh made a declaration of emergency under the authority of Louisiana Revised Statutes 30:1 *et seq.*, ordering the operator of the salt cavern underneath the area of subsidence to undertake all necessary activities to evaluate and abate any deterioration of the cavern's integrity;

WHEREAS, the Parish of Assumption declared a state of emergency in order to monitor and respond to the threat posed by this incident to its citizens in the Bayou Corne area;

WHEREAS, the State anticipates that further assistance may be needed to assist Assumption Parish in their response to this continuing threat;

WHEREAS, natural gas has been discovered in the sinkhole area, the cavern, and the aquifer in the surrounding area;

WHEREAS, it is necessary to renew Proclamation No. 82 BJ 2012, as extended by subsequent proclamations, to further extend the state of emergency due to the continuation of emergency/disaster conditions as above indicated;

NOW THEREFORE I, JOHN BEL EDWARDS, Governor of the State of Louisiana, by virtue of the authority vested by the Constitution and laws of the State of Louisiana, do hereby order and direct as follows:

SECTION 1: Pursuant to the Louisiana Homeland Security and Emergency Assistance and Disaster Act, R.S. 29:721 *et seq.*, a state of emergency is hereby declared to exist in the Parish of Assumption, as a result of the threat of the continued bubbling, location of new bubbling sites, reported pockets of natural gas in the alluvial aquifer near the sinkhole, subsidence, and sinkhole enlarging, threatens the lives and property of the citizens of the State.

SECTION 2: The Director of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness is hereby authorized to undertake any activity authorized by law which he deems appropriate in response to this declaration.

SECTION 3: All departments, commissions, boards, agencies, and officers of the State or any political subdivision thereof, are authorized and directed to cooperate in actions, the State may take in response to this incident.

SECTION 4: This state of emergency extends from Friday, January 15, 2016, to Saturday, February 13, 2016 unless terminated sooner.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand officially and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of Louisiana, at the Capitol, in the City of Baton Rouge, on this 14th day of January, 2016.

GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA

ATTEST BY
THE GOVERNOR

SECRETARY OF STATE