

Office of the Governor
State of Louisiana

JOHN BEL EDWARDS
GOVERNOR



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November 15, 2019

Honorable Bill Cassidy
United States Senate
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable John Kennedy
United States Senate
416 Russell Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Steve Scalise
United States House of Representatives
2049 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Cedric Richmond
United States House of Representatives
506 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Clay Higgins
United States House of Representatives
424 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Mike Johnson
United States House of Representatives
327 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Ralph Abraham
United States House of Representatives
417 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Garret Graves
United States House of Representatives
2402 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senators and Representatives:

As all you know, in late September, Secretary Wilbur Ross granted the request I made for a federal fishery disaster declaration for damage done to the Louisiana seafood industry as a result of the historic Mississippi River flooding in this past year. In support of that request, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries has been conducting a detailed assessment of the damage so that we can begin a program to compensate the hard-working people in the Louisiana seafood industry for their crippling losses.

The results of that assessment show that the Louisiana seafood industry has suffered over \$258 million in losses relating to the flood disaster. More specifically, the estimated losses to each fishery and fishing sector include: Blue crab - \$5.5 million; Brown shrimp - \$28.7 million; White shrimp - \$32.8 million; Private lease oysters - \$121.7 million; Public ground oysters - \$20.5 million; Black drum - \$0.37 million; Charter fishing (offshore) - \$1.7 million; Seafood processors

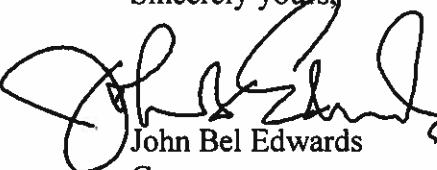
- \$47 million. As you are well aware, our fishing industries are hurting and are in very real need of recovery assistance.

Impacts to our fisheries resources have been far-reaching, touching nearly every fishery in every part of our state. Fisheries disaster assistance funding in the amount of \$165 million has previously been appropriated by Congress to NOAA Fisheries to assist with fishery disasters in seven states around the country. However, the impact in Louisiana alone far exceeds the amount of disaster assistance currently available.

I request your assistance to appropriate additional disaster assistance funding for Louisiana's fishing industries who have suffered so much during, and in the wake of, the devastating 2019 flood event. These men and women represent many facets of our important coastal heritage, from commercial fishermen, to charter fishermen, to seafood processors. I know that you, like me, value these residents of our great state, and the communities of which they are a part. Additional federal disaster assistance funding will greatly help these communities remain resilient in the face of environmental and economic challenges.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this request. If needed, please contact LDWF Secretary Jack Montoucet at 225.765.2806 or via email at jmontoucet@wlf.la.gov to discuss further. Both he and his staff stand at the ready to provide any additional information you may need as we all work together on behalf of the seafood industry and coastal resources to recover from this devastating flood event.

Sincerely yours,



John Bel Edwards
Governor