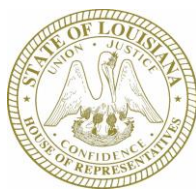


# LOUISIANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Natural Resources and Environment, Vice Chair  
Agriculture, Ways and Means  
House Executive Committee  
Joint Committee on Capital Outlay  
House Select Leadership Committee

## Ryan J. Bourriaque State Representative ~ District 47

February 2, 2023

Senator Bill Cassidy  
520 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington DC 20510

### RISEE Legislation-Letter of Support

Dear Senator Cassidy,

On behalf of the citizens of Louisiana House District 47, I would like to thank you for allowing me to comment on your proposed legislation dealing with coastal protection and restoration investments in the Chenier Plain region of Louisiana. I feel that it is only fitting when seeking this adjustment in funding to briefly review what Cameron and Vermilion parishes have been able to accomplish with current levels of GOMESA funds.

As you know, Hurricanes Laura and Delta struck the Cameron Parish coastline in August and October of 2020, respectively. These storms made landfall within fifteen miles of each other in the communities of Cameron and Creole. One major point of fact that may be lost to some in the aftermath of these storms is that Cameron Parish utilized a portion of their GOMESA dollars to fortify its shoreline in this very area. Cameron Parish was the first parish/county in the country to bond out its GOMESA allocation. This effort was done to expedite the benefits of having protection on the ground today versus a decade later once funds were sufficient enough to construct a project.

Because of efforts of our federal delegation, the Cameron Parish Police Jury, the Vermilion Parish Police Jury, the Louisiana Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority, and the Chenier Plain Coastal Restoration and Protection Authority, local projects have moved in fairly short order. Original allocations were received by the parishes in 2018. Some two short years later, projects have been constructed and are providing the protection we so desperately sought.

I could write a mini-thesis on the benefits of these dollars and the projects funded therewith; however, I hope pictures will speak louder than the words I write in this letter of support. The first effort I want to highlight is in Cameron Parish. The Rutherford Beach Shoreline Protection Project was a continuation of efforts with CWPPRA and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries as part of the Rockefeller Gulf Shoreline Protection Project.

The Rutherford Beach project was fully funded with Cameron Parish GOMESA dollars. Figure 1 below is a photo of the project post-Hurricanes Laura and Delta. The impacts were from two direct hits by hurricanes of Category 4 and Category 2 strength some six weeks apart. One can only imagine what the shoreline would have resembled had this structural protection not been in place prior to the storm events.



Figure-1 Rutherford Beach Shoreline Protection Project

Due to favorable bids being received for the Rutherford Beach Project, Cameron Parish was also able to construct shoreline protection in the Long Beach area located between Holly Beach and Johnson Bayou in western Cameron Parish. In the photo below, one can clearly see the previous shoreline protection efforts near the homes in the photo. The shoreline had seen drastic erosion rates over the previous fifteen years. This project was constructed in November 2020.

Today, you can see that the GOMESA-funded protection has developed land immediately behind the structure. This provides hope to homeowners who were being threatened by the waves of the Gulf of Mexico. In a short 90-day timeframe, the coastline has re-established itself further into the Gulf. These land gains in such a short time span are incredible and significant. We need to capitalize on the science developed here and continue these improvements now. This legislation assists in expanding the capacity to construct these critical coastal features in a timely fashion.



Figure-2 Long Beach Shoreline Protection Project

To the east of Cameron is Vermilion Parish. The Vermilion Parish Police Jury also prioritized getting projects constructed with its GOMESA dollars. Coastal protection projects have been identified as part of its bonding effort.

One such project is a shoreline protection project aimed at fortifying coastal areas in Vermilion Bay at Southwest Pass. This project was fast-tracked through the bid process, contracts have been awarded, and construction is 30% complete. Considering permitting timelines required for such a project, as well as the bonding process, this effort will be providing protection in short order.

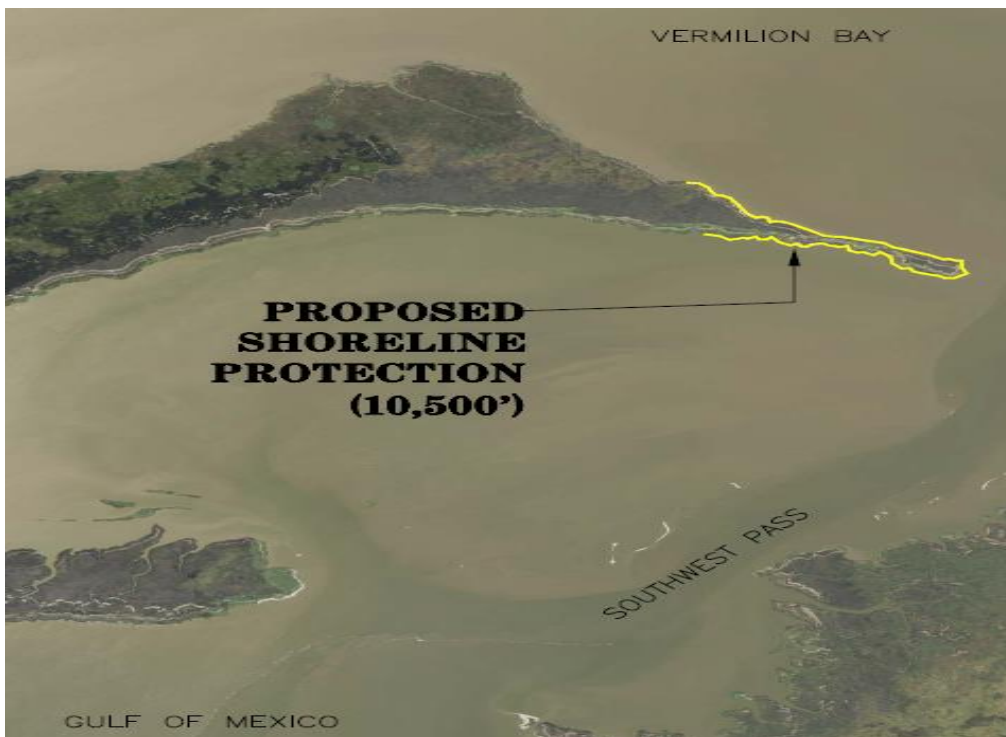


Figure-3 Southwest Pass Shoreline Protection Project

Senator, I want to thank you for providing District 47 and the Chenier Plain region of Louisiana with the opportunity to elevate these discussions to a nationwide audience. Hopefully, these efforts highlight the ability of our local partners to implement the very project features so desired when the GOMESA process began nearly fifteen years ago. In the past two years, our area has worked diligently with the CPRA and the Governor's Office to be awarded surplus State dollars to continue the breakwater effort. This shows support and buy-in from state and local agencies for this type of protection.

Please thank your colleagues for their consideration of future generations living, working, and recreating in coastal Louisiana while at the same time energizing the globe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ryan Bourriaque". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Ryan Bourriaque  
Louisiana State Representative  
District 47