

## RESOLUTION NO. 16-126

On motion of Council Member Black, seconded by Council Member Edgecombe, and on roll call all members present and voting “YES”, except Council Member Barthelemy who “ABSTAINED”, the following Resolution was adopted:

A Resolution supporting requests for Federal Legislation appropriating additional funds to be used for the repair of flood damage to the Mississippi River System and to restore the Mississippi River Ship Channel to fully authorized dimensions; and otherwise to provide with respect thereto.

WHEREAS, the prevailing 100-year El Nino weather pattern has been the prevailing driver of record stage levels on the Carrollton Gauge (New Orleans) for the months of July (2015), August (2015) and January (2016). These historic stage levels were most severe during the greatest flooding on record in the Middle Mississippi River Basin and near record flooding in the Lower Mississippi River; and

WHEREAS, sixty (60) percent of all grain exported from the United States is shipped via the Mississippi River from ports throughout the region, through the Lower Mississippi River Deep-Draft Ports Complex or the Ports of Baton Rouge, South Louisiana, New Orleans, St. Bernard and Plaquemines; and

WHEREAS, the value of the agricultural products and the large agribusiness industry in the Mississippi River Basin produces ninety-two (92) percent of the nation’s agricultural exports, seventy-eight (78) percent of the world’s exports in feed grains and soybeans; and

WHEREAS, navigation on the Mississippi River carries over 500 million tons of vital commodities such as coal, fertilizer, cement, gravel and salt, among others, which are the building blocks of our nation’s economy; and

WHEREAS, the performance of the levee system in the Lower Mississippi River Valley has a direct impact on the Mississippi River’s navigation system and its ability to function efficiently; and

WHEREAS, the United States Army Corps of Engineers’ (USACE) Operations and Maintenance Budget for the Mississippi River Ship Channel remains woefully inadequate with the President’s Budget request level at approximately \$86 million and the actual and consistent annual need is \$150 million. The Mississippi River Ship Channel remains deficient and accordingly the Bar, Crescent River and Federal Pilots have been forced to implement economically crippling draft restrictions with limits of up to 6 feet down to 41 feet in January 2016, presently holding at 43 feet versus authorized depth of 45 feet; and

WHEREAS, the Mississippi River and Tributaries (MR&T) Project, the nation’s first comprehensive flood control and navigation act, provides protection for more than four (4) million people that live in the Lower Mississippi Valley, impacts people in half the USA and since its creation in 1928, has saved thousands of lives, communities and more than half (\$0.5) a trillion dollars in property damage/loss; and

WHEREAS, beyond its flood control protection, the MR&T Project provides benefits crucial to the Mississippi Valley region, including stable and reliable drinking water supplies, power generation, navigation and commerce, economic development and recreation; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the historic floods of 2008, 2011, and 2016, the MR&T Project has been compromised; and

WHEREAS, failing to implement a systematic approach, experiencing a failure in the system or failing to restore the system in time for the next high-water event would be devastating to our nation’s economy and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress has the power to supply funding to the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers and other federal and state agencies so that those devastated by this year’s flooding can rebuild and restore their lives and livelihood; to approve and fund a comprehensive flood

control and navigation project for the upper Mississippi River Basin to protect people and property; to pass legislation providing the authority to streamline the existing complicated and lengthy planning processes required by the federal government along with the exhaustive regulatory reviews that significantly diminish funds that could be used for construction, especially projects cost shared with local governments; and

WHEREAS, the Plaquemines Port, Harbor & Terminal District has confirmed with the USACE that it is presently hampered by a funding shortfall of \$75 million to recover the nation's leading economic artery of trade, the Mississippi River Ship Channel from the flooding event of 2016;

NOW, THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE PLAQUEMINES PARISH COUNCIL AS THE SOLE GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF THE PLAQUEMINES PORT HARBOR & TERMINAL DISTRICT THAT it hereby supports the passage of supplemental appropriations of \$2.075 billion dollars to repair flood damage to the system and infrastructure and restore the Mississippi River Ship Channel to fully authorized dimensions; yearly funding in the amount of \$150 million for Operations and Maintenance of the Mississippi River Ship Channel and \$500 million for continued maintenance of the MR&T Project; and passage of a comprehensive flood control and navigation project for the upper Mississippi River Basin to protect people and property throughout the entire Mississippi River Valley; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, BY THE PLAQUEMINES PARISH COUNCIL AS THE SOLE GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF THE PLAQUEMINES PORT HARBOR & TERMINAL DISTRICT THAT it hereby supports passage of federal legislation providing main stem Mississippi River municipalities and ports as well as local levee and drainage districts in conjunction with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Mississippi River Commission the authority to streamline the burdensome regulatory and environmental processes to ensure federal dollars are spent directly on projects to protect people, property, and economic prosperity.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, BY THE PLAQUEMINES PARISH COUNCIL AS THE SOLE GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF THE PLAQUEMINES PORT HARBOR & TERMINAL DISTRICT THAT the Secretary of this Council is hereby authorized and directed to immediately certify and release this Resolution and that Port employees and officials are authorized to carry out the purposes of this Resolution, both without further reading and approval by the Plaquemines Parish Council.

I hereby certify the above and foregoing to be a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the Plaquemines Parish Council at a meeting held in the Temporary Court Building, 450 F. Edward Hebert Blvd., Belle Chasse, Louisiana, on Thursday, April 14, 2016.

  
Secretary