

BILLY TAUZIN
THIRD DISTRICT, LOUISIANA

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Washington, DC 20515

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February 14, 1991

Col. Richard V. Gorski
District Engineer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
New Orleans District
Post Office Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160-0267

Dear Dick:

The Water Resources Development Act of 1990, PL 101-640, contained a provision directing the Secretary of the Army to determine whether costs should be reallocated on the Hurricane Protection Levee project for Lake Pontchartrain.

As you know, this provision was included as a direct result of our effort to seek permanent forgiveness of the remaining St. Bernard Parish and Lake Borgne Basin Levee District portion of the construction cost of the project.

It is widely accepted that forgiveness is totally justified. In St. Bernard Parish, the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet has caused serious flooding and erosion problems. The Parish adamantly maintains that without the Outlet, the pre-existing back levee system would have provided adequate protection against flooding. However, once the Outlet was constructed, creating a hurricane flooding corridor, the Parish had no choice but to participate in the Hurricane Protection Levee project. St. Bernard Parish had agreed to construction of the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet after receiving assurances that the channel would enhance shipping interests and promote development in the area. Subsequent wetlands restrictions prevented development.

Of the devastating erosion caused by the Outlet, the majority is in St. Bernard Parish. The Outlet is seventy six miles long, seventy of which are in St. Bernard Parish.

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It is my understanding that the reallocation of cost study is to be conducted on the entire project. Orleans Parish and St. Charles Parish do not suffer the same consequences as St. Bernard Parish. Each parish's situation is unique. Therefore, I would like to respectfully request that the study be conducted on a parish by parish basis.

Please let me know the status of the study and of your intention to honor my request to separate the study by parish. In the meantime, I plan to renew my efforts during the 102nd Congress to obtain forgiveness for St. Bernard Parish and Lake Borgne Basin Levee District by statute.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,



BILLY TAUZIN
Member of Congress

BT:ss

cc: Dr. Elizabeth Zimmerman
St. Bernard Parish

Mr. Dan S. Caluda
Lake Borgne Basin Levee District



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS

P.O. BOX 60267

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70160-0267

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Planning Division
Plan Formulation Branch

Honorable Billy Tauzin
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Tauzin:

This responds to your February 14, 1991, letter concerning the provision of the Water Resources Development Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-640) for a study to determine whether the costs of the Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana, hurricane protection project should be reallocated.

We received approval from our higher authority this week to initiate a study addressing this provision, which is Section 116(k) of the act. Our study approach provides for an analysis of each separable element of the Lake Pontchartrain project. The portion of St. Bernard Parish protected by the project is included in the Chalmette Area Loop, which also includes the lower Ninth Ward of Orleans Parish. We will develop data on a parish-by-parish basis to the extent that data can be broken down by parish.

Sincerely,

Richard V. Gorski
Colonel, U.S. Army
District Engineer

CF(w/basic)
CDR USACE (CECW-ZM) (CECW-P)
CEL MV-EX, CEL MV-PD