

Office of the Governor
State of Louisiana

JOHN BEL EDWARDS
GOVERNOR



P.O. Box 94004
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70804-9004
(225) 342-7015
GOV.LA.GOV

February 19, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I appreciate your commitment to restoring our nation's footing as a global leader in the fight against climate change, and I look forward to continued collaboration with your administration. We know firsthand in Louisiana the impacts of climate change, of rising sea levels, and the increasing intensity of catastrophic weather events like the historic 2020 hurricane season in the Gulf of Mexico. To that end, I am respectfully requesting a meeting with you to discuss Louisiana's approach to climate change and to strengthen collaboration between the state of Louisiana and the federal government to meet our common climate goals.

In Louisiana we are working collaboratively—environmental groups alongside our energy workforce—to build a lasting, resilient plan to address our climate challenges. No state is more adversely impacted by climate change than Louisiana and likewise, no state is better positioned to deliver big and successful projects to capture and sequester carbon, promote hydrogen energy use, and deliver renewable energy.

Last year, I launched the Climate Initiatives Task Force and signed two executive orders setting ambitious goals regarding both carbon emissions reductions and coastal resiliency. Our plan is to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2050 and invest \$50 billion in rebuilding Louisiana's coast. Implementation of these plans requires sustainable and predictable revenues from oil and gas production in the Gulf of Mexico.

The Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) is the sole source of annually recurring federal revenue for the state's coastal program. Section 208 of your recent Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis established that your administration would review leasing and permitting programs on the Outer Continental Shelf. I urge you to keep in mind that our ability to address Louisiana's climate related challenges, improve our structural resilience to catastrophic weather events, combat coastal land loss, and reduce our carbon footprint relies heavily on sustainable and predictable oil and gas production in the Gulf of Mexico. The leasing cancellation and program pause creates uncertainty in our coastal planning process, having predicted \$389 million in GOMESA revenue over the next 3 years.

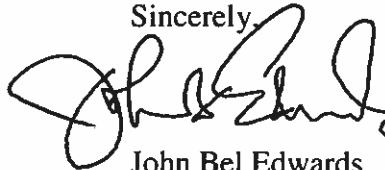
Louisiana is also entitled to \$9 billion of BP Settlement dollars from the Deepwater Horizon incident. Louisiana cannot gain access to these dollars until we have sufficient funds to apply for them. A lag, delay, or reduction in GOMESA dollars caused by the recent delay in leasing and permitting directly impacts the ability for Louisiana to realize the benefits of this legal entitlement. Combined with the BP settlement dollars, oil and gas production actually supports 85% of our coastal program.

At the same time, Louisiana's energy companies are rapidly prioritizing and deploying technology to operate more efficiently, reduce emissions, and accelerate renewable energy development. Our historic web of energy infrastructure and geology positions our state to rapidly accelerate carbon capture technology which has been proven to be the fastest and most efficient form to sequester carbon from the atmosphere. The same infrastructure that sustains our oil and gas operations in the Gulf of Mexico, the platforms, service vessels, technicians and mariners, also makes the Gulf of Mexico home to some of the most valuable offshore wind potential in the U.S.

Louisianans, whether they work in an oilfield or service wind farms and solar panels, know that delivering affordable, reliable energy and protecting our environment go hand-in-hand. After all, our homes, schools, and businesses along our eroding coast quite literally depend on that balance. I invite you and your team to visit our great state to see some of our climate-related work firsthand and to meet hardworking Louisianans powering our nation and the world.

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to working with you to build back better and create a brighter, cleaner world for future generations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Bel Edwards". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "B".

John Bel Edwards
Governor

cc: Regina A. McCarthy, National Climate Advisor, the White House