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Charlotte A. Randolph, *Parish President*

Office of Emergency Preparedness

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Parish President Randolph Addresses Economic Impacts of Drilling Moratorium and Oil Spill to National Commission**

Lafourche Parish President Charlotte Randolph addressed the National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling yesterday, citing the economic hardships Lafourche Parish and its citizens will face in the wake of a six-month drilling moratorium as well as the oil spill. Randolph was joined by other local leaders and officials on a panel addressing the hardships of the entire Gulf region, especially to the fisheries and oil service industries.

“Initially, I was skeptical of this commission and whether they would truly make a difference,” said President Randolph. “I feel like we can move forward with *some* cautious optimism that they at least understand the need for urgency on these matters. Hopefully, their insight will help steer the Obama Administration in the right direction.”

Randolph voiced concerns for oil rig and service industry workers, as well as for out-of-work local fishermen who are seeking economic relief to help them through this crisis. She also attacked the Obama Administration’s reasoning for instituting the drilling moratorium.

Randolph noted that the Louisiana Offshore Oil Port (LOOP), located 18 miles off the LA coast, handles tankers offloading one million barrels of oil per day. Statistics indicate the risk of tanker oil spilling is four times greater than a rig. “Mr. Obama’s assertion that it is not safe to resume drilling because response resources are stretched too thin should apply to all oil activities.” While she stressed that she is not advocating a halt to oil transport, Randolph noted the hypocrisy of the administration’s decision to issue a “pause” in production, but not in shipping.

Randolph ended her statement to the commission by saying, “Lafourche Parish is a resilient parish... We have survived because we are ready to take on whatever comes next, but we can’t do it with something we can’t control...with something that someone is going to take away from us without our input and without consideration of the economic injury it’s going to cause for us.”

After hearing from President Randolph and other local officials, former Environmental Protection Agency chief, and commission co-chair, William Reilly said he has a much greater sense of the economic problems the moratorium will cause. He also indicated that he initially felt the commission would not have much of a role in making in changes to the moratorium policy, but that he has had a change-of-heart after hearing the pleas of local officials. He indicated the commission could, in fact, put pressure on those decision-makers.

In addition, former Democratic Senator Bob Graham, the commission's other co-chair, expressed concern over the apparent disconnect between the Washington and the Gulf region about the sense of urgency needed on the moratorium issue.

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