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lrld.louisiana.gov

CONTACT: Rep. Tucker
Sen. Schedler
225.342.6287

OPPOSITION TO HOUSE BILL 49

BATON ROUGE -A majority of Republican House Members and other Democratic members opposed the passage of Senate Bill 49 based on the following:

The bill was jammed through the process over the last days of the session without proper public input. This bill will significantly change the landscape of Louisiana. Significant changes were made in committee earlier this afternoon, including changes in its basic corporate structure, its board of directors and its inter-relationships with local government. These changes raised serious questions amongst our members.

This morning on Baton Rouge television, Andy Kopplin, Executive Director of the LRA said the bill was not necessary at this time. We were told that federal housing money will not be available until early summer; therefore we can work together during the interim and draft a bill that is best for the affected area.

We are opposed to having a bill that is a gross expansion of bureaucratic government, potentially wasting precious limited federal funds. This bill was heading in that direction.

There are serious concerns regarding how this bill impacts New Orleans. It was so significant that the Bureau of Governmental Research came out against passing a bill now.

We had direct communication with Mr. Kopplin, Senator Vitter and Don Powell's staff that the LRA bill was most important. Additionally, there was no communication from our congressional delegation or from Secretary Powell's office that the defeat of this legislation right now would jeopardize any of our federal funding.

With over \$12 billion at stake our constituents deserve the best plan possible. It is significant that on this coming Monday, the Governor's housing plan is scheduled to be

released. We should not get the cart before the horse. We hope the plan outlines a clear and concise approach that will adequately serve the people so desperately effected. We pledge to work with Governor Blanco and the Administration and come back in the regular session to create a bill that will best serve the people of the State of Louisiana.

Don Powell said "...do it right" and "make sure it is transparent". This bill was neither. We want to make sure the money goes to the people and not the bureaucracy.

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