



The Shrimp e-Advocate

FYI

MAY 2010

The Southern Shrimp Alliance (SSA) is a non-profit alliance of members of the U.S. shrimp industry in eight states committed to preventing the continued deterioration of America's shrimp industry and to ensuring the industry's future viability. SSA serves as the national voice for the shrimp fishermen and processors in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas.

FYI



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Vitter Sends Letter Urging Obama to Authorize Loans to Fishermen

(Washington, D.C.) - U.S. Sen. David Vitter today sent a letter to the White House urging President Obama to use his statutory authority to establish an interim loan program to assist fishermen in the process of filing claims to recover damages from BP resulting from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

"The current law authorizes the president to provide low-interest loans to fishermen while their claims against BP are being resolved, a process which could take years," said Vitter. "I'm requesting that the president act quickly on this authority so that many of these affected south Louisianians and others along the Gulf Coast can receive more immediate

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assistance."

The text of Vitter's letter is below.

May 5, 2010

President Barack Obama

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW

Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama:

I am writing to express my appreciation for all the efforts directed to assist with recovery in the Gulf of Mexico following the catastrophe at Deepwater Horizon. These events were not only tragic, but the challenges with mitigating ongoing damages are significant, in particular to Louisiana's fishing industry.

I share the goal of working together on the federal, local, and state level to help the fisheries industry recover from the devastating effects of the oil spill. As you know, the estimated impact on the fisheries industry as a result of the spill will be felt for years to come. A preliminary study from the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi estimates that the loss of annual economic activity resulting from the damage to fisheries and associated tourism could be as much as \$1.6 billion.

In an effort to provide short-term assistance to these industries, I would like to call your attention to provisions of the law under Title 33 of the United States Code §2713 (f) (copy attached). After reviewing the law, it provides you the authority to create a loan program to assist fishermen during the interim claims process. I strongly request that you utilize this authority

and expedite the creation of such a loan program. As you will see in the law, you also have a great amount of flexibility in providing an effective loan program with attractive low interest rates and repayment schedules.

In light of the current plight of Gulf fisheries and the industries that are impacted, utilizing this authority could help mitigate the financial challenges our fishermen and their families will be facing while they wait on their damages claims from the responsible party.

Please let me know if I can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

David Vitter

United States Senator