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For more information, contact:
Dwayne Bourgeois, (985) 537-2244

**NLLD Executive Director to Testify Before U.S. Senate Committee
on Impact of High Flood Insurance Rates**

(New Orleans) – The U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship has invited North Lafourche Levee District (NLLD) Executive Director Dwayne Bourgeois to testify at a May 1 field hearing in New Orleans about the local impacts of higher flood insurance rates and the need to avoid new rate increases. Committee chairman is U.S. Senator David Vitter from Louisiana.

The NLLD and Bourgeois have worked diligently over the past few years with other parish, state, and federal leaders like Sen. Vitter to reverse the catastrophic flood insurance rate increases that resulted from changes in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). They have also pushed for the adoption of federal flood maps that more accurately depict the protection provided by local levees and locally constructed flood protection measures.

In his testimony, Bourgeois will request that, with the exception of properties that have suffered repeated severe loss, all new legislation be structured so that existing flood insurance policyholders are allowed to purchase flood insurance at approximately the same cost as before new legislation. He will also cite the imbalance in cost and revenue for the NFIP, with the programming collecting over \$9.67 billion more in premiums than it paid in claims between 1978 and 2013, and the huge lack of mandatory participation in the program, which drives up the cost for those who do have flood insurance.

“I am honored to be invited to speak to the Senate Committee members about the impacts that the current flood insurance program is having on Lafourche Parish property owners. Residents who for years have responsibly met all flood insurance requirements should not now be hit with substantial rate increases or face unjustified new requirements,” Bourgeois says. “Our delta is a working delta, the fruits of which are enjoyed by and enrich our entire nation. As such, the availability of federally-backed, affordable and financially stable flood insurance is of vital importance to our region and the entire nation.”

The Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee field hearing is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on the University of New Orleans campus.

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