Office of the Mayor-President

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MELVIN L. "KIP" HOLDEN
Mayor-President

April 29, 2009

The Honorable William Cassidy
United States House of Representatives
506 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-1806

Dear Congressman ~~Cassidy~~ Bill:

The construction of a new I-10 interchange at Pecue Lane is a high priority for the City of Baton Rouge-Parish of East Baton Rouge, and I ask for your support and assistance in obtaining funding through the transportation reauthorization.

As you well know, the southern portions of East Baton Rouge Parish and adjoining Ascension Parish have experienced significant population growth and expansion in recent years. As a result, traffic volumes have dramatically increased along the I-10 corridor - and development in this area is expected to continue to grow. Even currently, a national survey has ranked I-10 through Baton Rouge as the worst stretch of Interstate in the nation for freight traffic due to the severe congestion.

Additional access to and from the Interstate is badly needed along the I-10 corridor to accommodate these changing travel patterns and increased traffic. Construction of the new interchange will save 288,860 hours of travel while providing additional connectivity to I-10 to accommodate the region's dramatic growth. The Baton Rouge Area Chamber of Commerce has ranked this project as the number one road priority in the Nine Parish area – as well as the most cost efficient of 15 projects that it considered.

The total cost to complete environmental review and design is $29,000,000. The City-Parish's request for $15,000,000 therefore represents 52% of the total cost. The City-Parish will provide the non-federal match from our *Green Light Plan*, based on a 1/2 cent sales tax passed in 2005 for specific roadway improvement projects.

In addition, the City-Parish has and will continue to follow all relevant environmental and public participation requirements for the project. Initial public review has been accomplished by the affirmative vote to include this project in the Baton Rouge Metropolitan Area Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This project was also specifically included in the voter-approved Baton Rouge *Green Light Plan*. Regular communications and updates on the project are made available to the public through the *Green Light Plan* webpage.

For all of these reasons, I am and pleased to offer my support for this high priority for the City-Parish and the region.

Sincerely,

Kip

Melvin L. "Kip" Holden
Mayor-President