

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

R. BRUCE JOSTEN
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

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March 2, 2012

The Honorable Mary Landrieu
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Landrieu,

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region, supports S. 1400, the "Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economy of the Gulf Coast Act of 2011" (RESTORE Act).

The April, 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill and the Administration's subsequent moratorium on offshore energy production provided a one-two punch that has throttled the region's economy. While much of the Gulf's environment and economy has begun to rebound, there remains significant work to be done to bring the region back to its full potential. The RESTORE Act would provide a broad platform to expedite this recovery process.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is tasked with collecting civil penalties from the parties ultimately found responsible for the oil spill. The RESTORE Act would create the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund, to be funded by redirecting 80% of those penalties collected by the EPA. This legislation would bolster existing recovery efforts by allocating a portion of the funds to the five Gulf states to be used for ecological and economic restoration. Additionally, the legislation would establish the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Recovery Council and charge it with developing a comprehensive plan for ecological restoration and recovery, as well as fund recovery projects. Finally, the bill would create and fund a Gulf Coast Center of Excellence focused on research and innovation in relevant disciplines like fishery sustainability, coastal resiliency, and wetlands restoration.

The RESTORE Act, as currently written, is a common sense and bipartisan approach to a situation that has impacted the entire Gulf region. The Chamber supports S. 1400, and applauds your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,



R. Bruce Josten