



LOUISIANA SENATE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: 06.05.12

CONTACT: SEN. THOMPSON

PHONE: 318.878.9408

SEN. THOMPSON PLEASSED WITH OVER-ALL WORK OF 2012 REGULAR SESSION

NOTES SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS TO PROTECT AGRICULTURE AND VITAL PROJECTS DESPITE BUDGET CHALLENGE

District 34 State Senator Francis Thompson (D-Delhi) is generally pleased with the work of the 2012 Regular Session which concluded on June 3rd. Among the highlights are a budget that protects vital services, a construction budget that secures funding for important area projects, and legislation that protects agriculture and landowners and aids community and technical colleges.

"This year we were again challenged by daunting budget shortfalls, but again we were able to work with the administration to adopt a balanced state budget that makes strategic reductions across state government without decimating critical services and programs, such as funding for LSU Health Sciences Center/E.A. Conway Medical Center and higher education funding for ULM, Louisiana Tech, Grambling and our community colleges," said Sen. Thompson. "It is also important to note that this year's budget provides economic development funding used to attract new industries to Northeast Louisiana as a possible place to establish roots."

Sen. Thompson also notes that the state construction budget for the coming fiscal year funds critical projects in each parish within Senate District 34.

"I am extremely grateful that we were able to secure funding for these vital projects. The adopted construction budget will result in a good year for our area's schools, parks, roads, ports, airports and other community projects."

Important measures to protect agriculture and landowners also saw success during this legislative session. Sen. Thompson's Senate Bill 646, which protects the voluntary assessment voted upon by farmers to fund boll weevil eradication programs, has been signed by the governor. And, two measures that help to alleviate concerns of landowners during the cleanup and legal procedures of oil and gas Legacy sites were passed by the

legislature and are currently awaiting the governor's signature.

Lawmakers also agreed with Sen. Thompson's proposal to merge the campuses of the Louisiana Technical College with La. Delta Community College, sending it to the Governor's desk. Sen. Thompson says that this measure will target even more resources into the classroom and expand two-year college services to the citizens of the Northeast Louisiana region.

"Overall, I am pleased with the work of the 2012 Regular Session," said Senator Thompson. "I am confident that we were able to adequately fund state services without making devastating cuts to the LSU Health Sciences Center/EA Conway Medical Center or our higher education institutions, such as ULM, Louisiana Tech, Grambling and our community colleges. Despite the many challenges we faced, we were able to improve conditions and protect the welfare of our citizens. I look forward to continuing to work with all of my constituents to continue to better the community and livelihood of our people."

###