

SENATOR'S NEWS RELEASE

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SENATOR GERALD LONG PRAISES ADMINISTRATION'S COMMITMENT TO NORTHWEST LOUISIANA PROJECTS

LA SPORTS HALL OF FAME MOVES FORWARD WITH \$7.7 MILLION ALLOTMENT

Senator Gerald Long (R-District 31) expresses his gratitude to Governor Jindal's Administration for committing to appropriate \$7.7 million for the construction of the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and State Museum of North Louisiana in Natchitoches. Governor Jindal's Division of Administration announced the proposal, one of several to be awarded next fiscal year (FY 2011) to projects in northwest Louisiana.

Sen. Long said, "The Administration's commitment to fund this important project will now allow all planning and construction to move forward; everything is now adequately funded. The construction of the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame is a major step forward for the entire region and will have the ripple effect of encouraging significant economic development, as more people are drawn to the Natchitoches area. I would also like to thank Representative Rickey Nowlin for his hard work in getting this approved. This could not have been accomplished without his support."

The package of \$7.7 million, as inserted in the annual capital outlay bill proposed to the Legislature, brings the total level of funding for the museum to \$18.3 million, an amount considered sufficient to complete the construction of the facility and outfitting of initial exhibits. Originally, the completion of the project was in doubt, with some suggesting that the idea, conceived roughly four years ago, should be scaled back. Up until the Governor's announcement, only minor progress has been made toward the museum's completion. However, because of the commitment to full funding from the state, the project is able to move forward.

Other states with attractions similar to the Sports Hall of Fame and State Museum slated to be built in Natchitoches, have seen a noted increase in the level of tourism to their respective regions. Following completion of construction on the museum, Sen. Long said "I expect there to be an influx of tourists to the Natchitoches area, with positive effects for secondary businesses,

such as hotels and restaurants. On the whole, the project is certain to bring about the continued economic growth and improvement of the region.”

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