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## **ADDITIONAL \$800,000 ALLOCATED FOR SPORTS HALL OF FAME**

### **SENATOR LONG PRAISES STATE'S \$19 MILLION COMMITMENT**

Senator Gerald Long (R-District 31) praises Governor Jindal's administration for moving forward an additional \$800,000 in capital outlay funds for the construction of the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame and State Museum of North Louisiana in Natchitoches. This increases the total state commitment to the construction project to roughly \$19 million. Sen. Long said, "The additional funding secured by the administration will allow the museum's construction to be fully completed and its exhibits to be ready for display. The Sports Hall of Fame is an important project for our region because of its ability to encourage economic development. I want to thank Representative Rickey Nowlin for his ongoing support during this process."

Out of the project's total appropriation of \$19 million, \$7.7 million in the annual capital outlay bill before the legislature this session is allotted for the completion of construction, while the additional \$800,000 represents new appropriations in future funds to finance the museum's exhibits. Because of the state's commitment to fully funding the project, the museum's construction is able to move forward. The Sports Hall of Fame, originally founded in 1958 by the Louisiana Sports Writers Association and the only facility to recognize Louisiana's greatest athletes, coaches and teams from all sports genres, is expected to bring about significant economic growth once completed. The museum is expected to receive 40,000-50,000 visitors per year and a 2006 economic impact estimate projects \$120 million in revenue generated across the state, including construction costs and events scheduled statewide by the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame Foundation.

Sen. Long said, "The construction of the Sports Hall of Fame represents a major step forward for the region and our state. I expect the project to encourage an influx of visitors which will benefit both local businesses, such as hotels and restaurants, and also statewide economic growth. I want to thank Governor Jindal for continuing his commitment to this important initiative and funding the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame."

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