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### **SENATOR BRET ALLAIN PROVIDES UPDATE ON BAYOU CHENE FLOODGATE**

Construction is well underway on a permanent floodgate on Bayou Chene below Morgan City. District 21 State Senator Bret Allain (R-Franklin), who is a longtime proponent and advocate for the project, is pleased to see the progress that has been made thus far.

“I am thrilled to see this project coming to life,” said Sen. Allain. “For decades, we have fought to provide protection for the residents and businesses of six parishes. It was a long road, but we are finally starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel.”

When the Morganza Control Structure is opened during high water events, water is diverted from the Mississippi River into the Atchafalaya Basin. This causes backwater flooding throughout the region, threatening thousands of Louisiana homes and businesses. Mitigating this threat has been a top priority for Sen. Allain.

Funding for the project was announced in March 2019. However, before the project could begin, another high-water event triggered the emergency sinking of a barge, a temporary structure that was also used in 1973, 2011, and 2016.

“In the past, we’ve been able to protect the area by sinking barges. While this approach has been successful, it is costly and provides only a short-term solution. The historic flooding events and years of high-water have proven how necessary a permanent structure truly is. Together with state and local officials, we have been able to secure a plan and funding for putting one in place, the results of which are now tangible,” added Sen. Allain.

Officials from the St. Mary Parish Levee District and the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, who are overseeing construction of the automated barge floodgate, have confirmed that each of the project’s four phases is underway and the project is expected to reach completion later this year. Once the project is completed, community meetings will be held in the affected areas.

“I want to issue a special thank you to everyone that listened to our needs and made the permanent structure possible. The effort to bring this project to fruition has been long and arduous. I am proud to have worked across party lines and with both state and local officials to make it happen. I especially want to commend CPRA Board Chairman Chip Kline as well as his predecessor, Congressman Garret Graves; CPRA Executive Director Bren Haase; our local leaders like Tim Matte and Bill Hidalgo; and the current and former members of the St. Mary Parish Levee District for their unwavering dedication and support.”

Phases IA and IB, which involved clearing land and dredging, are complete. Phase II, which constitutes a bulk of the construction, is about 55% complete and expected to be finished in August. Phase III, the construction and installation of a floating barge, is in progress and expected to be done in September. And Phase IV, which involves levee work, is also well underway and should be complete in June.

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