

[Letterhead]

April 30, 2025

Honorable Phillip DeVillier
Speaker of the LA House of Representatives
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Baton Rouge, LA 70804-4062

Honorable Ryan Bourriaque, Chair
Transportation, Highways, and Public Works Committee
Post Office Box 94062
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Honorable Bryan Fontenot, Vice Chair
Transportation, Highways, and Public Works Committee
Post Office Box 94062
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RE: Opposition to House Bill 480 on behalf of the Caddo-Bossier Parishes Port
Commission

Members of the Louisiana House of Representatives:

The Parish of Caddo hereby expresses its strong opposition to House Bill 480, authored by Representative Danny McCormick.

For over 30 years, the Caddo-Bossier Parishes Port Commission (the "Port Commission") has successfully utilized conduit-type financing for vital economic development projects within Caddo and Bossier parishes. The conduit financial structure has significantly benefited the citizens of Caddo and Bossier parishes through substantial job creation and monetary investments. These projects have been instrumental in the region's growth and prosperity.

The Port Commission is governed by a nine-member Board of Commissioners, appointed by the City of Shreveport, the Caddo Parish Commission, the Bossier Parish Police Jury, and the City of Bossier City. The Northwest Louisiana region faces intense competition for projects, given our proximity to East Texas and Southwest Arkansas. In addition to managing maritime, railroad, and ground transportation facilities at its 5,000-acre Port complex, the Port Commission serves as a critical economic development agency.

As such, the Port Commission relies on a full range of economic development tools to recruit and retain jobs and investment in Northwest Louisiana. Representative McCormick's bill would strip the Port Commission of a proven and effective tool that has served the communities of Caddo and Bossier parishes for more than three decades. The passage of House Bill 480 would suffocate the Port Commission's ability to remain a vitally important economic development engine in the Northwest Louisiana region.

The Port Commission has effectively utilized Payment In Lieu of Taxes ("PILOT") agreements in major recruitment and retention efforts to generate jobs and expand the sales and use tax base in Caddo and Bossier parishes. The PILOT program is a widely used and accepted

practice throughout Louisiana and the nation, and its preservation is essential for the Port Commission's continued success.

Throughout the Port Commission's history, every negotiated PILOT has garnered overwhelming support from local governing authorities. The passage of House Bill 480 would render the Port Commission significantly less competitive in attracting potential companies seeking to locate to Caddo and Bossier parishes.

In the context of its overall economic development strategies, the PILOT program provides the Port Commission with the opportunity to offer prospective companies a beneficial inducement which is not otherwise available through state incentive programs. The Port Commission, comprised of appointees from Northwest Louisiana, has consistently managed the implementation of its PILOT program by balancing incentives provided to prospective companies and the fiscal requirements of major local taxing agencies, including the Parish Governing Authorities, the Caddo and Bossier Sheriff's Offices, and the School Boards of Caddo and Bossier Parishes.

The Parish of Caddo urges the Louisiana Legislature to reject the passage of House Bill 480. Preserving the Port Commission's ability to utilize PILOT programs is crucial for the continued economic growth and prosperity of Northwest Louisiana.

Sincerely,