



Citizens for 1 Greater New Orleans

Let your voice be heard in rebuilding the Greater New Orleans Area


[Home](#)
[About Us](#)
[Our Reform Initiatives](#)
[Resources & Collaborations](#)
[Archives](#)
[Contact Us](#)

Media

[Levee Home](#)
[Legislative Activity](#)
[Corps of Engineers
Levee Tour
Nov. 2010](#)
[Levee & Flood
Protection
Contacts](#)
[Archives](#)

Monroe News-Star

Our View

September 26, 2006

There are 13 proposed amendments to the Louisiana State Constitution on the Sept. 30 ballot. We believe that legislators should have handled many of these matters through statutes. But for now, they have passed their legislative duties on to voters. We studied the amendments, contacted legislators and related professionals in a careful attempt to make informed endorsements. We will present Amendments 1-5 today with the remaining amendments coming Wednesday. Our positions on the amendments follow:

Amendment 1 For Coastal and Flood Protection

The current Wetland Restoration and Coastal Fund's name will be changed to the Coastal Protection and Restoration Fund. It requires the state to place any future revenues from deepwater Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas production into this fund. Funds will be used only for the purposes of coastal wetland conservation; coastal restoration, hurricane protection and infrastructure directly affected by coastal wetland losses. We support the name change and the dedication of revenue to this fund.

Amendment 2 For Coastal and Flood Protection

If Louisiana sells any of the remaining portion of its multi-million-dollar tobacco settlement, 20 percent of the proceeds will be held in the Millennium Trust Fund that is dedicated to health care and education. The deposit will be earmarked for transfer to the Coastal Protection and Restoration Fund with the money available to provide a state match for federal funds. The federal government needs to see the state prepared to commit funds to coastal restoration. This amendment should do that.

Amendment 3 For Coastal and Flood Protection

This amendment consolidates existing levee boards in southeastern Louisiana and creates just two districts — one on the East Bank of the Mississippi River — the other on the West Bank. The amendment also specifies professional qualifications for members of the boards and places levee boards members under the same standards as the Board of Ethics. It offers a comprehensive approach to flood protection in the region. Consolidation of the levee boards around New Orleans must happen.

Amendment 4 Against Coastal and Flood Protection

We oppose this amendment because it favors government over private property owners by reducing the amount of compensation for property that is expropriated or damaged by hurricane protection projects. Owners would be compensated at fair market value rather than for the "highest and best use" currently codified in Louisiana law.

Amendment 5 Against Expropriation or Eminent Domain

This is a well-intentioned amendment that came as a reaction to the Kelo case in Connecticut that allows the government or a private entity to take private property for economic development. We adamantly support the rights of property owners. That said, we oppose this amendment because it adds too much specific detail to the constitution and may prevent recovery in badly damaged hurricane regions of the state. This should be a statute, not an amendment.

Copyright (c) The News-Star. All rights reserved. Reproduced with the permission of Gannett Co., Inc. by NewsBank, inc.

