



The United States Conference of Mayors

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THE U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS BRINGS MAYORS TO THE GULF COAST

Mayors Tour BP Oil Disaster Waters, Meet with Fishermen, Develop Future Strategy Over Fresh Catch Louisiana Seafood Lunch In New Orleans Restaurant

N.O. Mayor Mitch Landrieu Hosts Mayors on Monday, June 21, 2010

New Orleans – The President of The United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) Burnsville (MN) Mayor Elizabeth Kautz, along with USCM Second Vice President Philadelphia (PA) Mayor Michael Nutter and USCM CEO and Executive Director Tom Cochran, today led the nation's mayors on a mission to New Orleans and the Gulf Coast to stand in solidarity with New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu and the mayors of the region impacted by the BP oil disaster, and to push Washington and BP to accept the recommendations adopted last week at the 78th Annual Meeting of The United States Conference of Mayors on the oil disaster.

Accompanying Mayor Kautz on the mission were several mayors from cities across the country including Santa Barbara and Long Beach (CA), Houston, Denton and Pasadena (TX), Baton Rouge, Lake Charles and Lafitte (LA), Biloxi and Prentiss (MS), Mobile (AL), Clearwater and Fort Myers (FL), and Everett (MA), as well as officials of the municipal leagues of the Gulf Coast states.

The mayors began the day with bus trip to Lafitte (LA), with remarks from Lafitte Mayor Tim Kerner and a briefing from U.S. Coast Guard Incident Commander Captain Roger Laferriere at the Emergency Operations Center. Following the briefing, the mayors toured the oil-soiled marshes in boats with Louisiana fishermen. The day then concluded with a late seafood lunch and press conference at Bon Ton Café in New Orleans.

"The nation's mayors are here today to stand together in solidarity with our colleagues as we have with other disasters – 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina – and to offer our support to the people of the Gulf Region. We know better than anyone else what mayors go through and we applaud the leadership of the mayors of the affected areas. We have gained today a better understanding of the true impact of the oil well disaster on the people, the environment, and the culture here, and Mayor Landrieu has made us even more determined to put the full force of our organization behind the national effort to do what must be done for all the cities and towns that have been, and will be, affected," said Conference President Burnsville (MN) Mayor Kautz at Bon Ton Café.

Kautz also discussed oil and gas revenue sharing, as established by the 2006 Domenici-Landrieu Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act, and offered support for federal revenues to be directed to Gulf states immediately instead of 2017. "Action on this measure is long overdue. We ask Congress and the administration to support accelerated revenue sharing without delay," said Kautz.

Philadelphia (PA) Mayor Michael Nutter, who is the Conference's Second Vice-President, explained why he traveled from the East Coast to get a first-hand look at the disaster. "If a disaster of major proportions struck Philadelphia, I would want the mayors of the nation to come to my aid. So, I wanted to personally let my fellow mayors of the Gulf Coast know that the nation's mayors support them. We must also understand that this is a major national disaster, not simply a disaster for the Gulf Region. What happens to one of us happens to all of us and we must band together especially in times of great challenge."

Last week during The Conference of Mayors' Annual Meeting in Oklahoma City, U.S. mayors passed a resolution on the oil disaster calling for the Obama Administration to establish a special task force of appropriate senior federal officials, including a Gulf Oil Disaster commander to direct the actions of all the federal agencies involved, to provide timely and updated information to mayors and local officials on mitigation efforts, and to ensure that lead federal agencies are coordinating closely with cities and local governments in ALL PHASES of the national response.

"The oil spill is a national tragedy that requires a national response, so I am proud to stand in solidarity with mayors from across the country, particularly Gulf Coast mayors, as we face this daunting challenge. The disaster threatens our coast and environment, our fisheries that feed the nation, and our unique culture that is the highlight of New Orleans' tourism industry. After Hurricane Katrina, we were grateful to have the support and assistance of cities across the country, and we need the same unity of purpose to meet these new challenges," said Landrieu as he thanked Mayors for responding to his call to come to New Orleans and welcomed them to eat with him at Bon Ton café in the business district of the city.

During the press conference, Mayor Kautz also named Mayor Landrieu Chair of the USCM's Committee on Tourism, Arts, Parks and Sports. "There is not a mayor in this nation who better understands the critical importance of tourism to a healthy economy in a city. This appointment is in recognition of the national leadership Mayor Landrieu has shown in the support of the tourism industry throughout his career, and as this Committee's Chairman, Mayor Landrieu will speak for the nation's mayors and cities on tourism. It is estimated that over one million jobs in this region alone are directly related to the tourism industry, and that almost \$100 million is spent annually on tourism here. It is appropriate and especially important during these challenging times that a mayor from the Gulf area will lead our efforts to ensure that tourism remains a vital industry on the Gulf Coast and across the nation," Kautz concluded before sitting down to a seafood lunch. "We want people to know that they can still come to this region for vacation and continue to enjoy the local cuisine."

"The Conference of Mayors has a strong history with the city of New Orleans – Moon Landrieu, Dutch Morial and Marc Morial were active members in our great organization and all served as Presidents of the Conference. We are proud to continue that tradition with Mayor Landrieu, and are committed to do what we can to help the people of the Gulf Region who are most immediately impacted by this disaster," said Tom Cochran, USCM CEO and Executive Director.

Participating Mayors/Cities:

- Mayor Elizabeth Kautz, Burnsville, MN**
- Mayor Mike Nutter, Philadelphia, PA**
- Mayor Mitch Landrieu, New Orleans, LA**
- Mayor Kip Holden, Baton Rouge, LA**
- Mayor Randy Roach, Lake Charles, LA**
- Mayor Tim Kerner, Jean Laffite, LA**
- Mayor Helene Schneider, Santa Barbara, CA**
- Mayor Bob Foster, Long Beach, CA**
- Mayor Frank Hibbard, Clearwater FL**
- Mayor Randall Henderson Jr., Fort Myers, FL**
- Mayor Sam Jones, Mobile, AL**
- Mayor Charley Dumas, Prentiss, MS and Mississippi Municipal League President-Elect**
- Mayor A.J. Holloway, City of Biloxi, MS**
- Mayor Annise Parker, Houston, TX**
- Mayor Mark Burroughs, Denton, TX**
- Mayor Johnny Isbell, Pasadena, TX**
- Tom Cochran, CEO and Executive Director, The U.S. Conference of Mayors**
- Donald J. Borut, Executive Director, National League of Cities**
- George E. Lewis, Executive Director, Mississippi Municipal League**
- C. Scott Dudley, Florida League of Cities**
- Carrie Blanchard, Chief of Staff, Tallahassee, FL**

The U.S. Conference of Mayors is the official nonpartisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are 1,139 such cities in the country today, each represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the Mayor.