

Office of the Governor
State of Louisiana

JOHN BEL EDWARDS
GOVERNOR



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November 9, 2020

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Honorable Clay J. Schexnayder
Speaker of the House
Louisiana House of Representatives
Post Office Box 94062
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9062

RECEIVED
NOV 10 2020
9:01 am
House of Representatives
Clerk's Office

RE: Veto of House Bill 84 of the 2020 Second Extraordinary Session

Dear Speaker Schexnayder:

Please be advised that I have vetoed House Bill 84 of the 2020 Second Extraordinary Session.

This bill, if allowed to become law, would have the possibility to significantly impact the State's ability to respond to urgent needs in federally declared disaster. This legislation, developed without any consultation by the office charged with responding to emergencies, the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, is simply a solution in search of a problem. In addition, the bill suffers from ill-defined terms that would only cause confusion and delays in response. For instance, section C(2)(b) provides that federal funds may be expended prior to approval by the Joint Legislative Committee on the Budget (JLCB) only if JLCB is "unable to meet to approve the expenditure." However, the legislation provides no clarity as to what "unable to meet" means and if such inability to meet is based on any period of time. It is not acceptable that bureaucratic delays would prevent the flow of federal funds to Louisiana communities in times of desperate need. There is no reason to prevent federal dollars from being utilized for their intended purpose as quickly as possible during an emergency.

In this year alone, Louisiana has been hit by three hurricanes and two tropical storms all while confronting the most significant public health emergency in a century. This is simply not the time to be tying the hands of agencies to respond to these disasters by delaying their ability to expend federal funds.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of John Bel Edwards in black ink.

John Bel Edwards
Governor

cc: Honorable Patrick Page Cortez
Louisiana Senate President