



August 9, 2016

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

District Court Dismisses Coastal Lawsuits as “Premature”

Energy leaders point to latest ruling as further proof that the lawyer-driven litigation scheme is unnecessary

BATON ROUGE, LA (August 9, 2016)— The Louisiana Mid-Continent Oil and Gas Association (LMOGA) and Louisiana Oil and Gas Association (LOGA) today issued the following joint statement in response to 24th Judicial District Court Judge Stephen Enright’s recent ruling to dismiss several of the lawsuits filed by trial lawyers on behalf of Jefferson Parish against oil and gas exploration and production companies:

“The district court’s ruling makes it crystal clear that this litigation scheme is premature and inappropriate. As we have said from the beginning and the court ruling further reiterates, there is already a rigorous administrative process in place to ensure that each and every coastal use permit in the state is in compliance with the Coastal Zone Management Act.”

“Any issues or concerns regarding permit compliance can be addressed through the administrative review process without the excessive delays and exorbitant legal costs that come along with litigation. Using the existing state regulations is the most efficient and effective way to ensure that operators are in compliance with the CZMA.

“The only parties that benefit from these premature and unnecessary lawsuits are the small group of trial lawyers who initiated them to advance their own interests under the guise of the public interest.”

In a ruling issued August 1, 2016, Judge Enright found “existing administrative remedies must be pursued before a lawsuit for civil damages is pursued. The Parish and [State] Intervenors failed to pursue their administrative remedies and failed to show that the administrative remedy is irreparably inadequate. Accordingly, this lawsuit is premature for failure to exhaust administrative remedies and is dismissed without judgment.”

— more —

The Jefferson Parish ruling, which can be found online at <http://loga.la/jeffersonruling.pdf>, is the first significant district court ruling in any of the lawsuits filed by Jefferson, Plaquemines, Cameron or Vermilion parish over alleged violations of coastal use permits.

It comes just days after the Vermilion Parish Police Jury voted 13 to 0 to oppose the latest round of coastal lawsuits filed by Lafayette District Attorney Keith Stutes.

A similar lawsuit filed by trial lawyers on behalf of the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority- East (SLFPAE) was also dismissed in federal court last year.

About The Louisiana Oil & Gas Association

The Louisiana Oil & Gas Association was organized in 1992 to represent the Independent and service sectors of the oil and gas industry in Louisiana; this representation includes exploration, production and oilfield services. LOGA's primary goal is to provide our industry with a working environment that will enhance the industry. LOGA services its membership by creating incentives for Louisiana's oil & gas industry, warding off tax increases, changing existing burdensome regulations, and educating the public and government of the importance of the oil and gas industry in the state of Louisiana. Find out more information at: <http://www.loga.la>

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