



DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY

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February 4, 2008

I am pleased to present the Delta Regional Authority's detailed budget request for fiscal year 2009. The authority supports the president's recommendation of \$6 million.

This justification book contains financial reports, projected outcomes and a review of the authority's activities. Of the funding requested, \$1.5 million is requested for administrative expenses. The remaining \$4.5 million is requested to continue the authority's highly successful federal grant program, special initiatives and local technical assistance provided by local development districts.

Please note that the authority's fiscal year 2007 appropriation of \$12 million (minus a 1 percent rescission) allocated \$1.5 million for administrative expenses and \$10.4 million to fund various programs and technical assistance. The 2008 and 2009 DRA budget requests maintain the administrative expenses at \$1.5 million.

Congress created the DRA in 2000 with its passage of the Delta Regional Authority Act. In the 2002 farm bill, the authority was reauthorized until Oct. 1, 2007. The authorization was extended for a year in the omnibus appropriations bill. There is language in the House and Senate version of the 2007 farm bill to extend the DRA authorization to 2012.

Records indicate that the DRA has served its 240 counties and parishes well. The authority looks forward to working with Congress and the president to improve the economy of the region and the lives of the almost 9.5 million people who live here.

With a staff of just 15 people, the authority has refined its grant program to provide an effective, accountable mechanism for federal investment in the region. The program doesn't duplicate other federal programs in the region. Instead, the funds are used to leverage other federal funds along with state, local and private funds. No other agency does this. The authority also is serving as a regional planning entity and a coordinator of federal investments.

The authority has worked closely with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. Geological Survey, the Federal Emergency Management Administration, the Economic Development Administration and other agencies to improve life in the region. The DRA is building similar relationships with the Federal Communications Commission, the U.S. Department of Labor, the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Railroad Administration, the Federal Aviation Administration and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

With its federal grant program from fiscal year 2002 through fiscal year 2006, the DRA:

- Invested \$47,611,071 in 333 projects. These investments leveraged \$254,711,242 in additional public funds. That's an investment ratio of 4.35 to 1 in other public funds to DRA funds.
- Helped attract \$480,612,796 in private funds into the region, a ratio of 10.09 to 1.

- Had a total leveraged investment of \$687,712,966 in the region, a ratio of 14.44 to 1.
- Completed 176 projects that produced 3,488 jobs; allowed 4,008 jobs to be retained; provided improved water and sewer services to 6,219 families; and trained 2,584 workers.
- Has 157 active projects with projected outcomes of 5,135 jobs created; 5,825 jobs retained; 9,180 families receiving improved water and sewer services; and 883 workers trained.

In 2006, the U.S. General Accounting Office reported that the DRA's federal grant program led the nation in rural investment intensity with 77 percent of its investments going toward projects in rural areas.

Enclosed is additional information on these results. The results are broken down by the eight states in which the DRA operates and by fiscal year.

Finally, I want to quote from the authority's 2006 audit report, which was prepared in compliance with the Accountability for Tax Dollars Act of 2002:

“In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Federal appropriations and state matching funds of the Delta Regional Authority as of September 30, 2006 and 2005, and its net costs, changes in net position, budgetary resources, and reconciliation of net cost to budgetary resources for the years then ended, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.”

Breazeale, Saunders & O’Neil, LTD

Thank you for your support of the important work we do. Should you have questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (662) 624-8600, ext. 10.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pete Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pete Johnson
Federal Co-Chairman