



## DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY

### MAINTAIN FUNDING FOR DRA IN THE FY2012 APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

#### BACKGROUND

The Delta Regional Authority (DRA) is a regional economic development agency that represents a partnership between federal, state, and local government. Established in 2000, the Delta Regional Authority works to improve life for the 10 million people who reside in the 252 Delta counties and parishes in eight Delta states (Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri and Tennessee). DRA is composed of the governors of the eight Delta states and a federal co-chair, who is appointed by the President and confirmed by the U.S. Senate. Local participation is provided through multi-county local development districts.

On July 15, the U.S. House of Representatives approved its FY2012 Energy and Water Development appropriations bill, which contains funding for DRA. The bill (H.R. 2354) provides \$11.7 million for DRA, level with FY2011 funding. On September 7, the Senate Appropriations Committee approved its version of the bill which reduced DRA funding to \$9.9 million, almost a 15 percent reduction. Full Senate action on the bill has not yet been scheduled.

#### TALKING POINTS

The 252 counties and parishes served by the Delta Regional Authority make up one of the most distressed areas of the country. The disparities between the Delta region and the nation as a whole are stark. As defined by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), virtually all the counties and parishes in the region are distressed. The Delta region encompasses 111 of the 386 counties listed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as suffering from "persistent poverty."

1. Since its creation, the Delta Regional Authority has worked to improve the lives of the 10 million people who live in the Delta. Targeted investments in each of the eight states has created over 6,000 jobs and retained nearly the same number of jobs. **With a leverage ratio of 23:1, the DRA has leveraged \$1.4 billion in private investment with DRA projects and helped 17,000 families gain access to clean water and sewer service.**
2. **In its nine annual investment cycles, DRA has invested \$86.2 million into 610 projects in the Delta region, leveraging \$431.3 million in other public funds and attracting \$1.4 billion in private-sector funds, for investments totaling almost \$2.0 billion.**
3. DRA's strategic investments are helping to create and retain 36,418 jobs, provide clean water and working sewer to 57,823 families, and deliver job training or employment-related education to 6,548 people for jobs in their areas, all within a highly distressed part of the nation.

#### ACTION NEEDED

Urge your Senators and Representatives to actively support \$11.7 million for DRA's community and economic development programs as part of the final FY2012 Energy and Water Development Appropriations bill.

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