



NEWS RELEASE

LOUISIANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Rep. Hodges pushes for Capital Outlay amendment to fund Hooper Road Extension and Widening Project

Capital Outlay includes \$72 Million for Comite River Diversion Canal Project

The House Committee on Ways and Means, Monday, passed House Bill 2, with amendments, which provides for the funding of capital outlays, including the Hooper Road Extension and Widening Project, as well as the Comite River Diversion Canal Project, both supported by State Representative Valarie Hodges, R-Denham Springs. Rep. Hodges, who has been a constant champion for these projects, which impact her district said, "I am, as I always have been, in full support of both of these projects."

The Hooper Road Extension and Widening Project originally included proposed reauthorized funding for only \$1.3 million, under the Capital Outlay bill; however, Rep. Hodges requested that Ways and Means Committee Chairman, Rep. Neil Abramson, include an amendment to HB2 that would provide \$4.2 million in new proposed funding. Rep. Hodges said, "The City of Central and Watson are both fast growing areas, and the Hooper Road Extension and Widening Project will directly help meet the needs of both communities."

The project now has a total of \$5.5 million in proposed funding for 2018-2019. This funding would support planning, engineering, right of way, utilities and construction for the project, benefiting, not only the City of Central, but also East Baton Rouge, Watson and Livingston Parishes.

Additionally, HB2 included \$72 million for the Comite River Diversion Canal Project. HB2, as it stands, reauthorizes these funds. Rep. Hodges said, "This is good news for my district and those surrounding my district, which were hit hard by the August 2016 flood. It has taken daily dedication and hard work, but we have finally broken through the stalemate of funding for this project. There is no reason we should not see dirt moving by this fall."

Rep. Hodges went on to say, "I am so excited to see these long overdue projects actually beginning to materialize. "HB 2 passed out of the Appropriations committee Tuesday with proposed funding for both projects intact. HB2 will next be heard on the House Floor.

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