



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Coalition Pushing to Fix Misguided FEMA Regulation Causing Widespread Property Value Loss and Dilapidation in Pascagoula

Pascagoula, Miss. — On Tuesday, May 24th, Jackson County Economic Development Foundation, in partnership with the City of Pascagoula and Merchants and Marine Bank, announced a new initiative, S.O.S. Pascagoula, to bring awareness to a post-Katrina federal regulation that is crippling Pascagoula and call for change.

The group of stakeholders formed an impressive coalition comprised of community leaders and concerned citizens to help tell their stories. Today's launch included the unveiling of the initiative's logo, website (SOSpascagoula.com), and an informative video featuring former Gov. Haley Barbour as its narrator. You can view the video [here](#).

Speakers at the press conference included: Mary Martha Henson, Deputy Director of Jackson County Economic Development Foundation; Pascagoula Mayor Jay Willis; Tee McCovey, President & CEO of United Way, Jackson & George Counties; Paige Roberts, President & CEO of Jackson County Chamber of Commerce and Alan Sudduth, Manager, Mississippi Policies & Government Affairs, Chevron.

Former Gov. Haley Barbour said, "Folks in Pascagoula have been unable to sell their homes, unable to maintain them and unable to insure them, because the federal government has set a standard for flood protection that is not suited for reality."

"Pascagoula is a special place. Jackson County is the most industrialized county in the State," said Mayor Jay Willis. "With 5,000 new jobs and \$600 million in capital investment announced in the past 24 months, it makes no sense that Pascagoula doesn't have adequate housing options for our working people. We need Congress to take action and curtail FEMA's overbearing, unnecessary and harmful regulations."

"Misguided federal policy is handcuffing Pascagoula and it's time for all of us to do something about it. It is critically important to our community that we get relief from FEMA's substantial improvement

rule,” said Clayton President and CEO at Merchants & Marine Bank. “This is something I believe in wholeheartedly and am proud to have Merchants & Marine Bank support it in every way.”

“We have seen great success and growth in employment in Jackson County, but unwise FEMA rules prevent our property owners from being able to maintain and repair their homes,” said George Freeland, Executive Director at Jackson Economic Development Foundation. “It’s not reasonable to tell a homeowner they can’t fix their home after a kitchen fire, because they fixed their roof and electrical the year before. That’s the sort of madness we are dealing with on this issue. Our Mississippi Congressional delegation is helping, and we look forward to working with them as we share this story with Congress.”

For more information, visit: www.SOSpascagoula.com

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