



Rodney Alexander / Louisiana's 5th District
THOUGHTS FROM THE HILL

January 18, 2008

It's a Season of Change For Louisiana's Leadership

The weather was warm and sunny on the day our new governor officially took office, unseasonably warm weather that seemed to foretell of brighter days ahead for Louisiana.

As a citizen whose entire family has invested their lives into Louisiana, I am looking forward to seeing the ideas Gov. Jindal has shared and the passion he has shown translate into real progress for our state.

And as member of the U.S. House of Representatives, who worked with Jindal during the most trying time in our state's history, I believe his experience in Congress and the relationships he shares with the Louisiana Congressional delegation will allow us to work efficiently in future state-federal collaborations.

It is truly a season of change for Louisiana's leadership, but that change is not solely on the state level.

Jindal's new role creates an opening in the Louisiana Congressional delegation, but his Capitol Hill shoes are not the only ones that will have to be filled in the year to come.

Soon there will be two other pairs, and they're pretty big.

To say U.S. Rep. Jim McCrery and U.S. Rep. Richard Baker will be missed in our delegation is a feeble attempt to commend the two gentlemen who have served Louisiana in the U.S. House of Representatives since 1986.

Over the past 20 years, McCrery and Baker have dutifully fought the good fights in the halls of Congress, earning top positions in key committees that enabled them to represent their constituents and all Louisiana citizens in way that has not only made a powerful difference in our state, but has also set very high standards for those who will follow in their footsteps and for those, such as myself, who have had the honor of working with them.

Upon their retirements, Rep. McCrery will leave as the top Republican on the House Ways and Means Committee, and Rep. Baker will leave his role as a senior member of the House Financial Services Committee.

The two gentlemen have been voices of experience and wisdom speaking out for Louisiana's interests in Congress for so long that it is hard to imagine serving without them.

Fortunately, the legacy of their commitment and upstanding service to our state will remain as an example to me, as I prepare to take on new responsibilities as a senior member in the delegation, and to my colleagues and future colleagues in the House as well.

For that, I wish to say thank you to the both of them.

U.S. Rep. Rodney Alexander, R-Quitman, represents the 5th Congressional District and serves on the House Appropriations Committee and the House Budget Committee. He can be reached at the Monroe District Office (318-322-3500), the Alexandria District Office (318-445-0818) or Washington, D.C. (202-225-8490.) Visit Alexander's Web site at www.house.gov/alexander or write him at 316 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515.

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