



News Release From . . .

Congressman Rodney Alexander

5th Congressional District of Louisiana

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Contact: Adam Terry
202-225-8490

ALEXANDER ANNOUNCES \$500,000 FOR SPARTA STUDY **FUNDING WILL BE USED TO FUND STUDY TO FIND ADDITIONAL WATER SUPPLIES**

Washington, D.C. --U.S. Rep. Rodney Alexander, R-Quitman, today announced that he has secured a USDA Rural Development grant totaling \$500,000 for the Union-Lincoln Regional Water Supply Initiative.

The grant will be used to produce a water resource study that will evaluate sources of dependable water supply that can be developed and used by rural communities.

"Preserving the Sparta Aquifer is imperative to north Louisiana residents and businesses," Alexander said.

"Since I was elected to Congress, I've worked to secure funding for this imperative project. This funding will be used to find ways to save our drinking water supply for future generations."

Alexander laid the foundation for securing this funding in last year's Agriculture Appropriations Conference Committee bill.

Alexander protected the language specifically addressing the Union-Lincoln Water Supply Initiative, helping to preserve the Sparta Aquifer, north Louisiana's groundwater source.

In 2005 Alexander, along with 32 other representatives and senators, was named to the House and Senate Agriculture Appropriations Conference Committee. This committee existed to reconcile the House and Senate versions of the 2006 Agriculture Appropriations Act.

"Protecting this language in conference was the number one reason I sought an appointment to this powerful conference committee," Alexander said.

The language states: *not to exceed \$18,250,000 shall be for technical assistance grants for rural water and waste systems pursuant to section 306(a)(14) of such Act, unless the Secretary makes a determination of extreme need...*

This \$500,000 USDA grant is in addition to last year's announcement of \$125,000 that Alexander and U.S. Sen. David Vitter worked to secure in the 2006 Agriculture Appropriations Conference Report.

"This is a significant amount of federal funding for a local project," Alexander added.

"This funding is symbolic of how important this project is on the federal level, and it also is a positive signal that additional funding will be secured to meet the needs of protecting the

Sparta Aquifer in the future."

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