



CENTER FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL LAW
LOYOLA UNIVERSITY NEW ORLEANS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**POLICYMAKERS, RESEARCHERS, RESIDENTS DISCUSS LOUISIANA CLIMATE CHANGE
VULNERABILITIES AT APRIL 15th FORUM**

Participants will develop and present recommendations for risk reduction and preparedness in coming years

NEW ORLEANS — April 15, 2016 — Today, The Center for Progressive Reform, Loyola University New Orleans Center for Environmental Law and Oxfam America are presenting a one-day forum on risk reduction strategies for the Louisiana coast. The purpose of the event is to create space for people from coastal communities, especially those outside the federal levee system, to voice their concerns, needs and ideas about nonstructural risk reduction strategies, and to host a multi-sector dialogue about policy options.

Rob Verchick, President of the Center for Progressive Reform, and Professor and the Gauthier-St. Martin Chair in Environmental Law at Loyola University New Orleans said "Working together, residents and political leaders can protect coastal populations and their way of life. But we need action and leadership now. This forum, which includes residents, policy makers, and researchers, is a step in that direction."

The forum will include presentations of the findings of two new research papers commissioned by Oxfam in 2015 that reveal community perspectives on coastal strategies. The first report, by *A Sense of Place at Risk: Perspectives of Residents of Coastal Louisiana on Nonstructural Risk Reduction Strategies* by Pamela Jenkins, Research Professor of Sociology (Emerita) at the University of New Orleans, is based on her interviews with a diverse group of lifelong residents from three coastal parishes at the epicenter of coastal land loss about their situation and views on current policy proposals. The second report, *Climate Change, Resilience, and Fairness: How Nonstructural Adaptation Can Protect and Empower Socially Vulnerable Communities on the Gulf Coast*, by the Center for Progressive Reform, a nonprofit research and educational organization with a national network of legal scholars, contains lessons learned and best practices from nonstructural adaptation strategies in the Gulf Coast region, the Northeast, and the Midwest. Policy recommendations from a coalition of community-based organizations and Oxfam, based largely on the research papers, were presented as well.

"We are excited to be sponsoring this event along with Center for Progressive Reform and Loyola University, New Orleans Center for Environmental Law. The papers being presented capture the important perspectives of the people who live in high-risk areas and valuable lessons learned from disaster mitigation and response efforts in other states." Said Laura Inouye, Deputy Director, U.S. Regional Office, Oxfam America.

The hosts collectively hope the event will result in a set of priority policy recommendations and shared understanding of their importance for policymakers to consider over the next couple of years.

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR PROGRESSIVE REFORM

The Center for Progressive Reform is a nonprofit research and educational organization with a network of Member Scholars working to protect health, safety, and the environment through analysis and commentary. The organization's 50+ Member Scholars -- working academics at institutions of higher learning across the United States -- provide research, analysis and commentary on a range of issues related to the environment, health and safety.

ABOUT THE LOYOLA CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

Loyola's Center for Environmental Law brings together dedicated students, inspiring professors, expert lawyers, and active members of the community to study and respond to the most challenging environmental problems along the Gulf Coast and beyond.

ABOUT OXFAM AMERICA

Oxfam America is a global organization working to right the wrongs of poverty, hunger, and injustice. As one of 17 members of the international Oxfam confederation, we work with people in more than 90 countries to create lasting solutions. Oxfam saves lives, develops long-term solutions to poverty, and campaigns for social change.