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LAKE CHARLES MAYOR JOINS NATIONAL CHALLENGE TO IMPROVE CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING

LAKE CHARLES, La., April 9 -- The city of Lake Charles issued the following news release:

Mayor Randy Roach is among the first 100 mayors to join a new initiative sponsored by the National League of Cities to promote city leadership in efforts to help children and families succeed. The Mayors' Action Challenge for Children and Families calls on mayors to implement programs to meet the needs of families in their community. Founded by 26 of the nation's most prominent mayors, the Challenge urges mayors to prioritize the investment of area resources in programs that focus on children and families. The economic crisis has highlighted the critical role of these investments in laying the foundation for local growth and vitality. To view the full list of participating mayors, visit www.mayorsforkids.org. Mayors participating in the Challenge are setting goals and benchmarks tailored to local circumstances, needs and priorities for the children and families in their cities.

The program concentrates on providing: * Opportunities to learn and grow; * A safe neighborhood to call home; * A healthy lifestyle and environment; and * A financially fit family in which to thrive. Mayor Roach plans to work with area communities, agencies and other local partners to define a set of goals that addresses the needs of child and families in Lake Charles. "We have been involved with a number of initiatives and projects that are working on behalf of the needs of children and families in our area," said Mayor Roach. "Some of these initiatives include: the City's mentoring program for at-risk youth known as "Team 5"; recreation improvements including the Neighborhood Parks Improvement Program with shade structures and other improvements to encourage outdoor play; the Adventure Cove playground, accessible for children of all play abilities; the national "Playful City" designation which recognizes the City's commitment to outdoor playgrounds; a cooperative endeavor agreement with the Calcasieu Parish School Board and the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury to expand the T & I Vocational Center on College Street; the Children's Summit held earlier this year and the City's effort to help establish a local organization to coordinate and focus efforts to promote the health and well-being of our children," he said. The Mayors' Action Challenge for Children and Families is supported by the National League of Cities through its Institute for Youth, Education, and Families. The National League of Cities is the nation's oldest and largest organization devoted to strengthening and promoting cities as centers of opportunity, leadership and governance. NLC is a resource and advocate for 19,000 cities, towns and villages, representing more than 218 million Americans.