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RELEASE: Gov. Edwards Announces Additional Extension of FEMA's Temporary Housing Program for 2016 Flood Survivors

Baton Rouge – Today, Gov. John Bel Edwards announced that his request for a third extension of the federal temporary housing program for survivors of the August 2016 floods has been approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through January 15, 2019. Gov. Edwards requested that homeowners be given additional time and the low rent for the Mobile Housing Units (MHUs) be retained as survivors rebuild their homes that were either severely damaged or destroyed by the floods. The incremental rent increases on the MHUs remains in place. FEMA has confirmed this will be the final extension to the program.

"We welcome this news from FEMA and thank the agency for recognizing the needs of our people who are putting forth great effort to return home and rebuild their lives," said Gov. Edwards. "The number of families relying on temporary housing is declining but it still remains necessary for many families as they continue to recover. We are committed to helping them work with FEMA on the incremental rent increases as well as helping them find long-term and affordable housing solutions."

As of July 19, 2018, there are 595 homeowners and 19 renters occupying the THUs nearly two years after the disaster. At the state's request, FEMA provided the units as a last resort to some survivors who were unable to find temporary housing. The state continues to use various programs to assist homeowners including the Restore Homeowner Assistance Program to help survivors get back into their homes and the Rapid Rehousing Program which provides eligible renters with a three month housing voucher and matches them with available housing resources.

FEMA's Streamlining Rent Collection Appeals process remains in place to help occupants determine the amount of rent that is within their financial ability by taking into account each household's income and current housing expenses (including mortgage payments on their pre-disaster residence).

The state's Rehousing Panel, led by the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP), continues to meet and work with FEMA on long-term solutions for MHU occupants. Flood survivors in MHU's are required to prove they are making progress or home repairs or finding permanent housing. FEMA will allow those who

continue to meet FEMA’s eligibility requirements to remain in the program until the new deadline date.

By federal regulation, FEMA’s MHU program ends 18 months after a disaster declaration date. This historic flooding in August 2016 created overwhelming challenges for short-term, interim and permanent housing options. Those factors have led to the state’s requests for extensions.

Here are the latest MHU numbers provided by FEMA in mid-July:

Move Outs

- More than **4,000** households—about **87 percent** of those who received FEMA-provided mobile homes—have recovered and returned home or found other permanent housing.

Current MHU Statistics

- As of July 19, **614** households remain in FEMA-provided mobile homes.
 - Statewide, there are 644 MHUs as some households have more than one unit.
- This amount includes the parishes with the most remaining MHU units:
 - Ascension Parish: **85**
 - East Baton Rouge Parish: **350**
 - Livingston Parish: **189**

MHU Background Information

- Overall, FEMA provided mobile homes to about **4,500** households across 16 parishes.
- FEMA customized mobile home installations for each household. Measures included outfitting units for those with access and functional needs, transporting units, connecting utilities and securing units to maximize safety.
- Serving a population of about **12,000** survivors, FEMA hauled and installed enough units to create the equivalent of a small city.
- The first household moved into a mobile home on **Aug. 24, 2016**—less than two weeks after the presidential disaster declaration.

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