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State Opens Alexandria Mega Shelter for Texas Harvey Survivors

BATON ROUGE, La. -- Tonight, the LSU AgCenter mega shelter in Alexandria opened to take in Texas survivors from Tropical Storm Harvey. The shelter is staffed by the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services.

"We stand ready to help our neighbors from Texas," said Gov. John Bel Edwards. "This mega-shelter will provide a safe and clean environment where survivors can rest and receive the kind of care they need as they face the aftermath of this storm. DCFS Sec. Marketa Walters and her very experienced team have spent days preparing this shelter just in case this kind of situation developed, and they are ready to provide assistance. We understand what it is like to have your lives and homes completely turned upside down by natural disasters, which is why we are committed to doing all that we can to make this very difficult time as comfortable as possible for those in need. Texas has been an outstanding neighbor to Louisiana when we have needed them, and now we intend on returning the favor."

DCFS set up 2,000 cots in the Alexandria mega-shelter on Friday, preparing for the possibility of opening its doors as rainfall inundated a large swath of eastern Texas and bore down on Louisiana.

"Taking care of people in their hour of need is what we do at DCFS. Our team assigned to the Alexandria shelter served flood victims in shelters in August and we're ready to welcome our neighbors who have been through so much with this storm," said Marketa Garner Walters, Secretary of the Department of Children and Family Services.

This operation has been a multi-agency, multi-level, cooperative effort. The mega shelter adds to the shelters open in Louisiana. The American Red Cross announced Wednesday it was opening two additional shelters -- at the Burton Coliseum in Lake Charles and Christian Love Baptist Church in Alexandria.

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