

ALEC distributes Hurricane Relief Funds

For Immediate Release

Addie Armato

225-933-6723

aarmato@alec.coop

BATON ROUGE (October 2, 2020) – At their September 28 board meeting, the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives (ALEC) Board of Directors reviewed monetary donations received from electric cooperatives, cooperative employees, and our cooperative partners and vendors from over 24 states to the ALEC Hurricane Relief Fund. The ALEC board approved different levels of monetary donations to Beauregard Electric (BECi) and Jeff Davis (JDEC) cooperatives that had almost 40 employees homes affected significantly by Hurricane Laura.

On September 30, ALEC CEO Jeff Arnold hand delivered checks to Beauregard Electric general manager Kevin Turner and board member J.R. Hickman and to Jeff Davis Electric general manager Mike Heinen to distribute to their employees. “They’ve had the most unimaginable thing happen to them. They’ve lost their homes and everything they have worked for, but because of the generosity of others and the cooperative way we are able to deliver them some hope and relief,” said Arnold.

Hurricane Laura is the worst storm to make landfall in southwest Louisiana. At landfall it was a Category 4 storm with sustained winds of 140 mph. Leaving a trail of widespread destruction from the coast all the way to north Louisiana.

Louisiana’s Claiborne Electric had never experienced a hurricane because its service territory is approximately 300 miles north of the coast. Most storms typically downgrade to tropical storms or tropical depressions by the time it makes its way to north Louisiana, but Hurricane Laura remained a Category 1 when it reached the Claiborne Electric service territory. “What we experienced was unprecedented. We are just fortunate none of our employees had any severe damages to their homes,” said Claiborne Electric general manager Mark Brown.

Electric cooperatives closer to the coast were not so fortunate as many employees did experience damages to property or destruction of their homes. “Our employees know they are committed to restoring the power after a storm, so no matter what has happened to their homes and property they show up to work. Their commitment to our consumer-members is what makes me proud of this team,” said BECi general manager Kevin Turner. Dedicated electric cooperative employees leave their homes and families to go help others. Most of the time they leave behind their own personal property damages and destruction to go help others in need.

“It’s a selfless act,” said Mike Heinen general manager at JDEC. “We have employees that have lost their homes, we have expecting mothers and fathers that can no longer return to their homes, yet they are here at the office working 16-hour days, seven days a week.”

Immediately after Hurricane Laura, ALEC activated its Hurricane Relief Fund. “We began getting inquiries from our sister cooperatives and cooperative partners all over the United States within days of the storm,” said ALEC Chief Operating Officer Beama Pierce. “It was overwhelming to see the outpour of love and support.” ALEC collected almost \$200,000 from many cooperatives, cooperative employees, and cooperative partners and vendors.

Louisiana electric cooperative employees will use the donations to help pay insurance deductibles and start rebuilding their lives once the power has been restored to their members. “It’s what makes working for electric cooperatives so special. We are all family and we take care of one another,” said Arnold.

The Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives Board of Directors on behalf of the Beauregard Electric and Jeff Davis Electric cooperative employees would like to thank all the cooperatives, cooperative employees, and our cooperative partners and vendors who made contributions to the ALEC Hurricane Relief Fund.

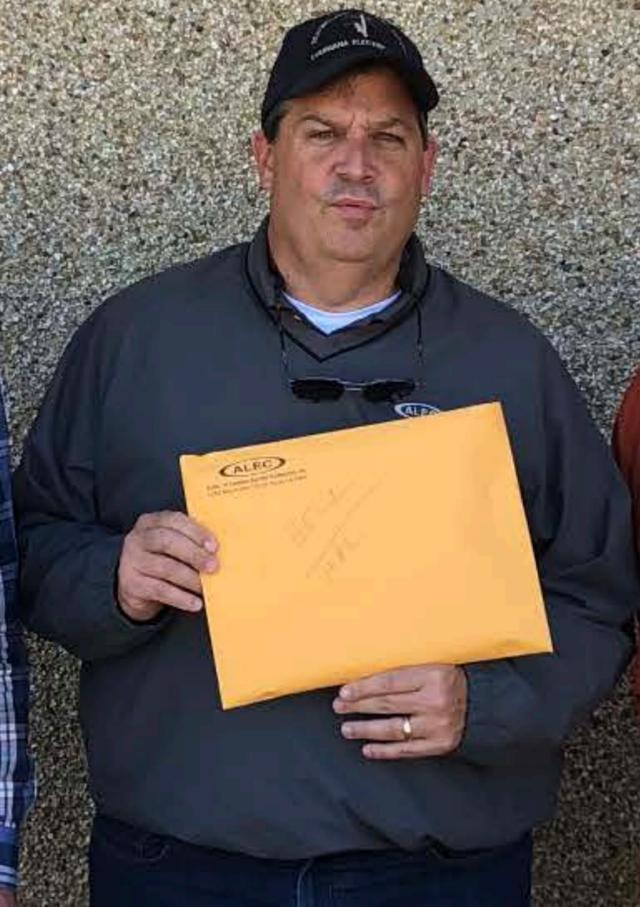
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Photos: BECI- ALEC CEO Jeff Arnold distributes Hurricane Relief Fund checks. Accepting the donations on behalf of the affected BECI employees are General Manger Kevin Turner and Director J.R. Hickman
JDEC- ALEC CEO Jeff Arnold distributes Hurricane Relief Fund checks. Accepting the donations on behalf of the affected JDEC employees are Anya Killmer and Skylar Hebert.

Addie Armato
ALEC
Director of Member Engagement
Office 225-923-3450 ext 118
Mobile 225-933-6723



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