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Southern Business & Development: Louisiana No. 1 In Number Of Major Business Projects Per Capita

Lake Charles ranks as No. 1 small market in South, based on 2014 project investments and job creation

BATON ROUGE, La. — Today, *Southern Business & Development* magazine ranked Louisiana No. 1 among Southern states for attracting the most significant capital investment and job-creation projects per million residents. States earn points for large employment projects (200 or more jobs) and large capital investment projects (\$30 million or more) attracted during 2014. Louisiana led the region with the most points-per-million at 105.4, easily outdistancing second-place Kentucky (63.4) and third-place Oklahoma (63.2). Neither Louisiana nor Texas, the overall points leader, earned the 2015 State of the Year designation, which the publication awarded to Kentucky.

Louisiana, which has ranked No. 1 in the South for six straight years in the points-per-million category, has earned State or Co-State of the Year honors from *Southern Business & Development* in five of the past seven years. In addition to Louisiana's top-ranked 2015 performance, Lake Charles earned the magazine's designation as the 2015 Small Market of the Year, while New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Shreveport and Houma-Thibodaux each earned honorable mention recognition for top markets of the year.

Governor Bobby Jindal said, "When we first took office, we set out to establish Louisiana as the new frontier for business opportunity, including a top-notch business climate that would attract world-class capital investment and job-creation projects. Today, Louisiana is that state, as we now attract many of the world's best economic development projects and retain more and more of our best and brightest graduates. Today's recognition by *Southern Business & Development* demonstrates that the world is looking at Louisiana in a new way and that we are achieving record results because of our positive reforms. We are excited about our economic momentum for one overarching reason – more Louisiana residents every day are able to find to quality jobs and build great careers without having to leave the state they love. We will continue to work tirelessly to fulfill our destiny as the best place in the world to live, work and raise a family."

The latest *Southern Business & Development* State of the Year results are published in the magazine's SB&D 100 issue, which reports the Top 100 economic development deals across the South in both investment and job categories. Each state earns 10 points for projects within the investment and job Top 100 lists. Projects below the Top 100 that include at least 200 jobs or \$30 million invested net five points each for their states.

Lake Charles (55 points) received the title of 2015 Small Market of the Year, which evaluates markets in the South with a population under 250,000. Houma-Thibodaux (20 points) received honorable mention in that category. In the 2015 Major Market of the Year category, which ranks

performance for metro areas of at least 750,000 but less than 2 million population, New Orleans (205 points) and Baton Rouge (100) joined Nashville, Tennessee (155), Kansas City, Missouri (115) and Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina (100), as honorable mention winners. For the 2015 Mid-Market of the Year title, Shreveport, Louisiana (45 points), joined Huntsville, Alabama (45), and Northern Kentucky (40) as honorable mention selections among metros with at least 250,000 but less than 750,000 population.

Louisiana earned honorable mention State of the Year honors with a wide variety of project announcements in 2014, such as CSC's 800-job technology center in Bossier City, Cheniere Energy's \$6 billion expansion of its LNG project in Cameron Parish, Venture Global's \$4.25 billion LNG complex at the Calcasieu Ship Channel in Cameron Parish, CGI's 400-job technology center in Lafayette, and Yuhuang Chemical's 400-job, \$1.8 billion methanol manufacturing complex in St. James Parish.

Louisiana now ranks higher in every national business-climate ranking than it ever did prior to 2008. In five national business climate rankings – those published by *Area Development*, *Business Facilities*, *Chief Executive*, *Site Selection* and international location marketing firm DCI – Louisiana now ranks among the Top 10 states in the U.S.

Since January 2008, Louisiana has secured economic development projects that are resulting in more than 91,000 new jobs, more than \$62 billion in new capital investment and hundreds of millions of dollars in new sales for small businesses across the state.

Business Facilities has honored LED FastStart[®] as the nation's No. 1 workforce training program for the past five years in a row. *Business Facilities* also ranked Louisiana No. 1 in the publication's 2014 ranking of business climates. *Site Selection* named LED the best-performing state economic development agency in the nation in 2011 and No. 2 this year, while Pollina Corporate Real Estate ranked LED as tied for the best-performing state economic development agency in the nation in 2013.

For more about the 2015 State of the Year rankings and the SB&D 100 report in *Southern Business & Development*, visit www.sb-d.com.

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