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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 31, 2020

RESPONSE TO MISINFORMATION ABOUT SHELTERS

(LAFAYETTE, La.) - There have been numerous misleading reports circulating on social media and various media outlets surrounding an email between LCG Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Cydra Wingerter and local non-profit organizations. Accusations made based on the email inferring that Lafayette will not support our neighboring communities are categorically false and inappropriate.

State GOHSEP officials made it clear that congregate sheltering was not advised due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Friday, August 31, 2020, Wingerter and Chief of Minority Affairs Carlos Harvin engaged with members of the non-profit and church communities to explore options for sheltering in Lafayette if the state were to request our assistance. After the events around the city this past weekend, Wingerter requested local pastors "pause" efforts to establish shelters.

"I personally witnessed pedestrians walking in and along Johnston Street carrying semi-automatic weapons and wearing bullet-proof vests. I was concerned. Many people were concerned," Wingerter said. Pastors responded to Wingerter to inform her they were aware of the situation and hesitant to open a shelter because of the unrest and uncertainty.

Lafayette has been providing support to our neighboring parishes since before Hurricane Laura made landfall and will continue to support recovery efforts in any and all ways possible. Hundreds of families are currently being housed in parish hotels and as more rooms become available, we are working with the state to ensure all evacuees are properly served and cared for.

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