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LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

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OFFICE OF STATE MUSEUM

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**-PRESS RELEASE-**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**SYMBOL OF LOUISIANA REBIRTH RISES FROM CAPITAL CITY  
WITH OPENING OF NEW STATE MUSEUM IN BATON ROUGE**

*Art, Artifacts of Threatened Culture Highlight 100-Year Commemoration of State Museum*

**Baton Rouge, LA, January 10, 2006**— Showcasing the history and culture that make Louisiana unique in the world, Lt. Governor Mitch Landrieu announced today the grand opening of the new Louisiana State Museum in Baton Rouge on February 1, 2006, at 10 a.m., an event that will kick off a year-long Centennial Celebration of the State Museum System.

“Rebuilding Louisiana’s tourism and cultural industries is vital to the economic recovery of our state,” said Lt. Governor Landrieu, who oversees the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism (CRT) which includes the Office of State Museum. “Our cultural economy not only provides tax revenues and jobs, but also provides a positive reminder of Louisiana’s impact on the nation and the world.”

At a time when the national focus is on New Orleans and Louisiana, the State Museum will celebrate its 100<sup>th</sup> year of operation by highlighting 100 artifacts throughout the Museum system that symbolize the uniqueness of Louisiana and the impact our state has had worldwide.

“Louisiana is a destination like no other,” Lt. Governor Landrieu said. “As we open the first newly constructed building of the 100-year-old state museum system, we will unveil a unique collection of art, artifacts, interactive exhibits and cultural and industrial scenes that will attract tourists to the increasingly vibrant Capitol Park area of Baton Rouge. From a 45-foot Louisiana-made shrimp boat to Satchmo’s horn to a rare Civil War submarine, this new State Museum takes a very different approach to history. Rather than the typical chronological telling of history, our exhibits take visitors on a thematic tour of Louisiana history.”

Planning for the facility began almost a decade ago when Museum officials realized the great need for a state history museum in Baton Rouge, the capital city of Louisiana. Following the official opening on February 1, the museum will be open with free admission through February 5. On February 4, the museum will open to the public at 1 pm with a special open house and Louisiana Music Showcase, including performances by local musicians, many who have served as international ambassadors for Louisiana.

The grand opening on February 1 will also be the first official event of the Louisiana State Museum's year-long Centennial celebration in 2006, which will include birthday parties at each of the State Museum properties throughout the state. Reflecting the art deco State Capital edifice in its shining façade, the museum is a bold architectural statement in a new Capitol Park, and was designed by the award-winning New Orleans firm Eskew+Dumez+Ripple.

Lt. Governor Landrieu and CRT Secretary Angèle Davis have taken the lead in plans to rebuild the essential tourism and cultural industries with the four-point plan *Louisiana Rebirth: Restoring the Soul of America*. "We are not only striving to rebuild tourism and strengthen the cultural economy but we also hope to improve the lives of all of Louisiana's people with a recovery that is the standard for high performance, accountability and ethical behavior," said Secretary Davis. "The opening of this facility is an important symbol that we are inspired by the past achievements and accomplishments of Louisiana and its people and are moving forward towards even greater things."

Throughout 2006 the Louisiana State Museum will celebrate one hundred years of collecting, preserving and presenting the objects and artifacts that make up the history of Louisiana and its people. The Museum branches in New Orleans, Patterson, Thibodaux, Natchitoches, and now Baton Rouge each examine different topics that make up the fabric of the state's unique cultural heritage. These topics include jazz, Mardi Gras, art, important figures, conflicts, sports, industry, cultures and more. Changing and traveling exhibits cover additional aspects of the Louisiana story. Programs for the year-long celebration will be tailored to each community's individual heritage, with celebrations at all of the branches scheduled for July.

The Baton Rouge museum holds two exhibitions, *Grounds for Greatness: Louisiana and the Nation* and *The Louisiana Experience: Discovering the Soul of America*. The Capitol Park location at 660 N. Fourth St. also features a changing exhibit gallery and a multipurpose space for educational programs.

"All of the Louisiana State Museum properties throughout the state focus on different aspects of history and often address important parts of each community's culture and heritage," said Carma Fautleroy, Interim Director of the Louisiana State Museum. "Since this facility is in the state's capital, it was important to look at the entire state's culture from music, food, our role in the civil rights movement and all of the other pieces that make up the complete fabric of Louisiana."

The multipurpose and meeting room space are currently available for private event rentals. Once open, the Louisiana State Museum-Baton Rouge hours of operation will be from 9 am to 5 pm, Tuesday through Saturday, and 12 noon to 5 pm on Sunday. Admission will be \$6 for adults, \$5 for students, seniors, and active military and free to children under 12. Special hours on Saturday, February 4, will be from 1:00pm - 6:00pm for opening celebration activities.

The Louisiana State Museum is part of the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, which is overseen by Lieutenant Governor Mitchell J. Landrieu. The State Museum network includes six museums in New Orleans, sites in Natchitoches, Patterson and Thibodaux, and the Baton Rouge site that opens in February 2006. For details on sites, exhibits and events, call 800-568-6968 or visit <http://lsm.crt.state.la.us>.

For more information on the *Louisiana Rebirth* plan visit [www.crt.state.la.us](http://www.crt.state.la.us). High-resolution images can be found at [http://lsm.crt.state.la.us/site/pr\\_releases/pr\\_releases.htm](http://lsm.crt.state.la.us/site/pr_releases/pr_releases.htm)