

Congressman Jo Bonner, R-Alabama, announced Friday the availability of U.S. Small Business Administration low interest Economic Injury Disaster Loans for small businesses in the First Congressional District of Alabama that are impacted by the ongoing oil spill's curtailment of commercial and recreational fishing.

According to the SBA, eligible small businesses include those involved in shrimping, crabbing, oystering and fishing in the waters affected by the closure as well as small businesses dependant on the catching or sale of shrimp, crabs and oysters, suppliers of fishing gear and fuel; docks, boatyards, processors, wholesalers, shippers, retailers, and other small businesses dependent upon revenue from fishing, recreational and sports fishing small businesses, and coastal small businesses.

"I applaud the SBA for approving Governor Riley's request for these low interest loans for eligible small businesses in Baldwin, Clarke, Escambia, Mobile, Monroe and Washington counties," Congressman Bonner said.

"Alabama's seafood-dependant small businesses need assurances that they will have the financial resources to withstand a potential prolonged negative economic impact from this unforeseen disaster. The availability of these federal loans affords our small seafood businesses added flexibility to face an uncertain economic climate."

These SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loans are made available at 4 percent interest for up to 30 years with a limit of up to \$2,000,000. The SBA determines the amount and term of each loan.

These loans are also being made available for eligible small business and non-profits in Escambia County, Florida and George, Greene and Jackson counties in Mississippi.

The SBA will open local Business Recovery Centers in South Alabama where SBA customer service representatives will personally meet with applicants and answer questions. Those locations will be announced soon.

For more information, contact the SBA Disaster Assistance Customer Service Center at 1-800-659-2955, or by email at disastercustomerservice@sba.gov . You may also visit the SBA website at www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance