

International Union of Police Associations

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Mayor Holden Receives International Police Union's Meritorious Service Award

ORLANDO, FL – Mayor-President Melvin “Kip” Holden, of East Baton Rouge Parish, received the International Union of Police Associations' Meritorious Service Award, the organization's top national service honor recognizing elected officials who work closely with public safety, at their convention in Orlando, Florida this week.

The International Union, which represents several Louisiana jurisdictions including the Baton Rouge Union of Police Local 237, recognized Mayor Holden for his deep commitment to public service and especially to public safety.

The police organization presents the Meritorious Service Award once every four years.

With his executive committee in attendance, Chris Stewart, President of the Baton Rouge Union of Police introduced Mayor Holden and cited his commitment to make public safety and the city's contract with police officers top priorities in the city's budget.

Stewart told the conference that Holden delivered new technology to help fight crime in Baton Rouge, including an \$8 million grant to improve communications interoperability; and the implementation of a security canopy of cameras and a gunshot detection system to improve safety in at-risk areas.

Stewart also pointed out that Holden gave the Baton Rouge Police their largest pay raise in history without raising taxes.

The I.U.P.A.'s International President Sam A. Cabral presented Mayor Holden with the award saying, “With his 20 years of experience in public service Mayor Holden has a solid record of supporting public safety and the men and women who often go into harm's way to protect the citizens of Baton Rouge. As Mayor he has used his skills as a coalition builder to attract a broad, diverse base of support throughout the parish that has led to many successful programs all within his first term.”

Holden, who early in his career served as the public information officer for Baton Rouge Police, told the group his keynote address came easy to him because he was “among family.” He recognized the sacrifices police officers make saying, “The safety of our community depends on the sacrifices you make. This award is very humbling to me because it means that working together, we are improving the quality of life for hundreds of thousands of people.”

Mayor Holden was further praised by the law enforcement union for assembling a team of over 100 community leaders, citizens and university students to form his "Green Light Baton Rouge Citizens Council" to help develop his "Framework for Progress", a planning document which serves as the basis of his administration's goal to make Baton Rouge America's next great city.

The results of his efforts were lauded by the union based on his program to revitalize downtown Baton Rouge with the creation of an arts and entertainment district as well as marketing Baton Rouge as a desirable location for the film and video industry.

He was recognized by the union for the management practices he established that led to national recognition for his leadership during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina when the City-Parish that became a place of refuge for over 200,000 evacuees from South Louisiana in less than one week. Cabral pointed out, “During that time and under his guidance, the East Baton Rouge Parish of Homeland Security received full national accreditation, one of only ten Emergency Management Programs, and one of two city/county governments, to meet the nation's highest standards.”

Mayor Holden was further praised for a host of innovative efforts such as the first bond program in over 40 years to improve traffic flow and infrastructure, at a time when Louisiana was reeling from the devastation of two hurricanes. His efforts on Wall Street and with bond rating agencies upgraded bonds for East Baton Rouge Parish based on his administration's sound management policies, saving the taxpayers millions of dollars in interest.

Cabral concluded the presentation of the award saying, "Mayor Holden clearly demonstrated that public safety includes a close coordination of projects ranging from economic programs to improvement in the schools that provide a stable society which in turn improves the effectiveness of the law enforcement community."

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NOTE:

Originally chartered in 1979, the International Union of Police Associations, AFL-CIO is the only AFL-CIO chartered labor union that exclusively represents law enforcement personnel. The more than 100,000 law enforcement personnel (one out of every four eligible) represented by the I.U.P.A. are all full time employees of law enforcement agencies ranging from line officers up to first line supervisors as well as civilian employees. The I.U.P.A.'s mission is to protect and advance officers' wages, benefits and work conditions. Membership includes officers from agencies throughout the United States and in the Caribbean. More information is available at www.iupa.org.