



## **JEKYLL ISLAND AUTHORITY, BOARD PLEASED WITH NEW LAW**

**Jekyll Island, Ga. (June 5, 2007)** – With the signing of House Bill 214 into law by Governor Sonny Perdue, Jekyll Island enters a new phase of revitalization with strict protections from overdevelopment in tact.

The 40-year extension of the existence of the Jekyll Island Authority as the state's management entity for the resort insures that the current replacement and upgrade strategy of aging Island hotels and attractions will continue to move forward. The Jekyll Island Authority now has an 82-year life span, enough to satisfy new revitalization partners and their lenders.

"The lease extension was critical for us in forging a strong public-private partnership to address the revitalization of the island," stated Bill Donohue, Executive Director of the Jekyll Island Authority. "We appreciate the leadership and support of Governor Perdue, and the hard work of our legislators who put the bill together. And we especially appreciate the support of the people of Georgia, who support us everyday by visiting the island. We are ready to take the next step that will ultimately allow more folks to come and enjoy the history, natural areas and recreation that Jekyll has to offer."

"Jekyll Island is a fantastic resource with so much unrealized potential for being one of the most popular destination vacation spots on the Atlantic coast," said Governor Perdue. "I have today taken what is a giant step toward ensuring that the very qualities we admire most about Jekyll Island are protected while we set the stage for some much needed revitalization to occur."

The legislation also addressed several other key issues, which had been hotly debated around the state during the session. The Jekyll Island Authority Board of Directors has no objections to the other main subjects.

First of all, HB214 reinforces limited development of the fragile barrier island to not more than 35% of land above mean high tide, leaving 65% to remain in a natural state. Revitalization efforts will be focused on a replacement and upgrade strategy within the 35%. All but

approximately 100 acres have existing lodging facilities, attractions, golf courses or private home leases already within the footprint. The Authority welcomed renewal of the 65-35% mandate with the belief that the natural areas are themselves a main tourist draw.

Secondly, the lightly developed area on the south end of the island was addressed specifically as to future additional use. Only public amenities such as bike trails, picnic areas and nature paths may be added to this area. The Jekyll Island soccer complex, 4-H Center and St. Andrews picnic area along with a small residential neighborhood are located on the south end.

"On behalf of my fellow Board members, we are very pleased that this important bill was signed into law," said Ben Porter, Chairman, Jekyll Island Authority Board of Directors. "It is a great balance, giving us the lease extension that was needed, while adding protection that should allay any concerns for too much development."

### **About Jekyll Island**

Jekyll Island is a barrier island on Georgia's coast – midway between Jacksonville, Fla. and Savannah, Ga. Accessible by car just minutes from I-95, Jekyll Island offers a variety of amenities, including 10 miles of beach, four golf courses, a 250-acre Historic Landmark District, water park, tennis center, and an array of lodging options including hotels, cottages and campgrounds. Owned by the State of Georgia and managed by the Jekyll Island State Park Authority, Jekyll Island has had development limited to just 35 percent of its available land area. This unique aspect of Jekyll Island serves to preserve the critical barrier island ecosystem, as well as to provide guests with a unique escape from the crowds and complications of other beach resort destinations. Please visit [www.jekyllisland.com](http://www.jekyllisland.com) for more information, or call 1-877-4JEKYLL.

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