

Travelers Executive Presents Coast Plan
By Wally Northway
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GULFPORT -- Greg Toczydowski, president of personal insurance for The Travelers Companies Inc., participated April 8 on behalf of The Travelers Institute in a roundtable discussion in Gulfport hosted by Sen. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.). The session convened insurance industry experts, business scholars and elected officials at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College to explore long-term solutions to rising insurance costs and barriers to certain kinds of coverage on the Gulf Coast.

Toczydowski presented the Travelers Coastal Wind Zone Plan, a comprehensive, private market approach to improve the affordability and availability of coastal wind storm insurance for homeowners. The Travelers proposal includes four key principles: a stable and consistent regulatory environment, with a uniform set of rules applied to named windstorm coverage for coastal zones from Texas to Maine; transparency in calculating insurance premiums; federal reinsurance mechanism for extreme events; and, stronger buildings through federal guidelines for appropriate building codes and land use planning.

"At Travelers, we recognize that a viable coastal insurance market is important to Mississippi's economy, and as an industry leader, we feel a genuine responsibility to be engaged in finding a solution to this issue," said Toczydowski. "We believe that the Travelers coastal plan will help bring back private capital to the marketplace, alleviate the current stress on the residual markets and promote the availability and affordability of homeowners insurance within coastal communities. "

Other participants in the roundtable discussion included professors Howard Kunreuther and Erwann Michel-Kerjan from the Risk Management and Decision Process Center at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, Rep. Gene Taylor (D-Miss.) and Dr. Lloyd Dixon, an economist with the RAND Corporation.