

LOUISIANA RECOVERY AUTHORITY

A Resolution to Endorse Federal Recovery Priorities

September 11, 2007

OVERVIEW: A Resolution to urge and request the Louisiana Recovery Authority Board to endorse federal recovery priorities for the 110th Congress of the United States of America.

Whereas, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated much of south Louisiana in 2005, claiming lives, and destroying homes and businesses;

Whereas, two years after the storms, Louisiana has made great strides toward recovering to a stronger, smarter and safer state; however, much remains to be accomplished before the state reaches a full recovery;

Whereas, Governor Blanco and members of the Louisiana Congressional Delegation, along with members of the Louisiana Recovery Authority Board, have worked tirelessly to inform Congress of the state's recovery needs and have ensured that recovery funds already appropriated have been accounted for;

Whereas, Louisiana has reached a critical stage in its recovery and the future of the state will be highly dependent upon the receipt of additional federal resources and assistance;

Whereas, Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Majority Whip James Clyburn recently led a delegation of their congressional peers to the state to view progress and identify remaining recovery needs;

Whereas, such visit assisted Governor Blanco in reminding Congress and fellow American citizens that, although much has been accomplished, the needs of the state are great and that Louisiana continues to fight to recover; and

Whereas, it is imperative that the state promote its priorities for recovery and inform members of Congress and the general public of what Louisiana's remaining needs are to achieve full recovery and the sustainable growth envisioned in Louisiana Speaks and other long-term community recovery plans.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Louisiana Recovery Authority Board does hereby endorse federal recovery priorities for the 110th Congress of the United States of America as outlined below:

1. Continue the restoration of homeowner and workforce housing

- Fill the funding gap in the Road Home Homeowner Assistance Program

- Guarantee the use of Hazard Mitigation funds for the Road Home
- Secure comprehensive workforce housing assistance, starting with:
 - S 1668, the Landrieu-Dodd bill
 - HR 1227, the Waters-Frank bill
 - HR 1427, the Federal Housing Reform Act
- Stabilize the property insurance market with federal intervention

2. Secure rebuilt Louisiana with adequate flood and coastal protection

- Enact Water Resources Development Act conference report (S 1228, HR 1495)
- Secure waiver of or funding for Louisiana's 35% cost share for additional expenses to restore New Orleans flood protection to 100-year protection level

3. Cut through arcane bureaucracy by reforming the Stafford Act

- Create a catastrophic annex and implement other reforms to the Stafford Act to reduce red tape and streamline its Public Assistance program to better support the repair and reconstruction of our damaged schools, roads and bridges, fire and police stations, hospitals, etc.

4. Help families in crisis

- Immediately enhance behavioral health services, including mental health and addictive disorders, with a special focus on the student population
- Targeted homelessness solutions for areas most impacted by the storms
- Provide 3,000 new vouchers for permanent supportive housing (PSH) for people with disabilities and the frail elderly
- Expand direct assistance to returning families through the Louisiana Family Recovery Corps

5. Restore health care access for all

- Provide immediate deployment to the affected areas of mental health and other health care professionals through the United States Public Health Service to address shortfalls
- Enhance recruitment and retention of nurses and allied health professionals
- Expand access to care at the community level by securing flexibility to use existing funds for physician and clinic uncompensated care services
- Help hospitals address post-Katrina labor costs with Medicare wage index adjustment
- Support medical schools and hospitals that train physicians with an extended exemption from the traditional three-year rolling cost average that does not recognize post-disaster circumstances

6. Bolster economic recovery

- Enact pending small business assistance legislation:
 - HR 1468, disaster relief for small businesses
 - HR 1361, the RECOVER Act
- Enhance existing GO Zone tax incentives
- Increase the state's allocation of GO Zone bonds and New Markets Tax Credits
- Address the acute domestic labor shortages in all economic sectors through enhancement of available immigrant labor programs in the GO Zone

7. Locally driven rebuilding with a long-term vision

- Provide additional infrastructure funds for the implementation of local and regional long-term plans, which have been designed by Louisiana citizens as the blueprints for a safer, stronger and smarter Louisiana

8. Assist in the recovery of Louisiana's commercial and recreational fisheries

- Provide adequate and equitable resources for the recovery of our commercial and recreational fisheries, including direct support to fishers and seafood processors as well as infrastructure
- Ensure that FEMA tasks the Coast Guard by mission assignment or interagency agreement with the responsibility for conducting a comprehensive marine debris removal program as was done in Alabama and Mississippi
- Provide sufficient funding for NOAA to complete their Gulf Coast Survey work along the entire Louisiana coast