

Jefferson Fights for Local Universities

Congressman Jefferson announced that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) awarded Southern University at New Orleans (SUNO) over \$1.9 million in disaster recovery grants. FEMA reimbursed the university for housing students, faculty and essential staff at the Marriott Hotel since January. FEMA also provided trailers to house university classes and residential facilities until repairs are complete on their Pontchartrain Park campus.

Federal help is also in the pipeline for Dillard and Xavier Universities, UNO, Tulane and Loyola. Jefferson has been in conversations with FEMA to provide on-campus housing for

Dillard's students as they move out of the Hilton Riverside Hotel and back onto their Gently campus. He also invited members of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce to tour the New Orleans campuses and meet with university Presidents to have a greater understanding of their individual issues. He urged the members to try to secure more federal funding for institutions of higher education in the New Orleans area, as they have only received minimal assistance from FEMA and Congress.

"We will continue to work closely with our universities, especially those hardest hit, to see that they get the help they need to restore the provision of vital services to the community." ■

Jefferson Announces More Housing Solutions

(continued from page 1)

owner reoccupies the primary residence, the date of any sale or transfer of the property by the eligible homeowner, or March 1, 2007.

During the deferment period, the Department of Treasury would pay the amount of the monthly mortgage payment for each eligible homeowner to the lender, including principal, interest, taxes, insurance and such other amounts included in the monthly payment obligation. The advance money would be secured by a subordinate second lien on the affected home and repaid to the Treasury through the sale of their lien in the securities market, thus costing Treasury little, if anything at all.

Jefferson also introduced the **GO Zone Homeownership Tax Credit Act of 2006**. It will provide a powerful boost to developers to rehabilitate or rebuild single-family homes in New Orleans and the surrounding area,

helping those families who want to return as homeowners do so quickly. Patterned after what many believe to be the most successful housing program in our nation's history, the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC), the homeownership tax credit has the potential to be a very cost-efficient and effective tool to address the housing crisis confronting the Gulf States. More importantly, like the LIHTC, it benefits those who were disproportionately affected by the hurricanes – working families – by investing in affordable housing.

"Both individual homeowners and financial services industry participants are victims of these devastating storms," he said. "Both confront business and economic realities, and we must ensure that steps are taken to maintain both the hard-earned equity of homeowners in the Gulf and the industry's health during this difficult period." ■

Congressman Jefferson Releases Investigative Report on Katrina

As the House Select Committee on Katrina released its final report, "A Failure of Initiative," Congressman Jefferson released a supplemental report expressing his additional views. The report reinforced the need for further investigation into the aftermath of Katrina and called for a bipartisan, independent commission investigation. It also stressed the need to focus on present needs and priorities for recovery and rebuilding efforts.

"Overall, the majority report is a comprehensive, detailed recitation of the problems that occurred in responding to Hurricane Katrina," the report stated. "The majority report rarely assesses how these problems occurred, why they were not corrected sooner and who in particular was responsible."

"This investigation only tipped the iceberg of what we need to know about the days and weeks following the hurricanes," Jefferson said. "An independent, bipartisan commission, similar to the 9-11 commission, is necessary to provide true insight and give Congress the freedom to focus on meeting our present and most urgent needs – the ongoing rebuilding efforts along the Gulf Coast." ■

Driving Gas Prices Down

Responding to record high gasoline prices, Congressman Jefferson is offering legislation urging Congress and the President and the White House to take two actions immediately that can affect the prices consumers are paying for gasoline now:

- ✓ Pass a \$1000 tax credit for families with children so that hard-pressed families can get refunds at tax time for gas bills;
- ✓ Pass a resolution urging the President to call a summit of the major oil companies to get their agreement to establish a voluntary program to rebate part of their record profits to consumers. ■

Housing questions? FEMA concerns?

Contracting issues?

Questions about FEMA floodmaps?

My staff can help you.

Please call one of my district offices to get your questions answered.

Downtown New Orleans: 589-2274 Gretna/Westbank: 368-7019

FEMA Flood Advisories Add Certainty to Rebuilding Process

Now that the FEMA advisory flood maps are released Congressman Jefferson hopes that New Orleans families can return and rebuild with more certainty about where and how to do so. In March, Jefferson urged the White House to request more money for the levees surrounding New Orleans so that the maps could be released in a timely manner. Funding for the certified levees affects the way FEMA determines elevation standards, as stronger levees could ensure the safety of more residents, in more neighborhoods.

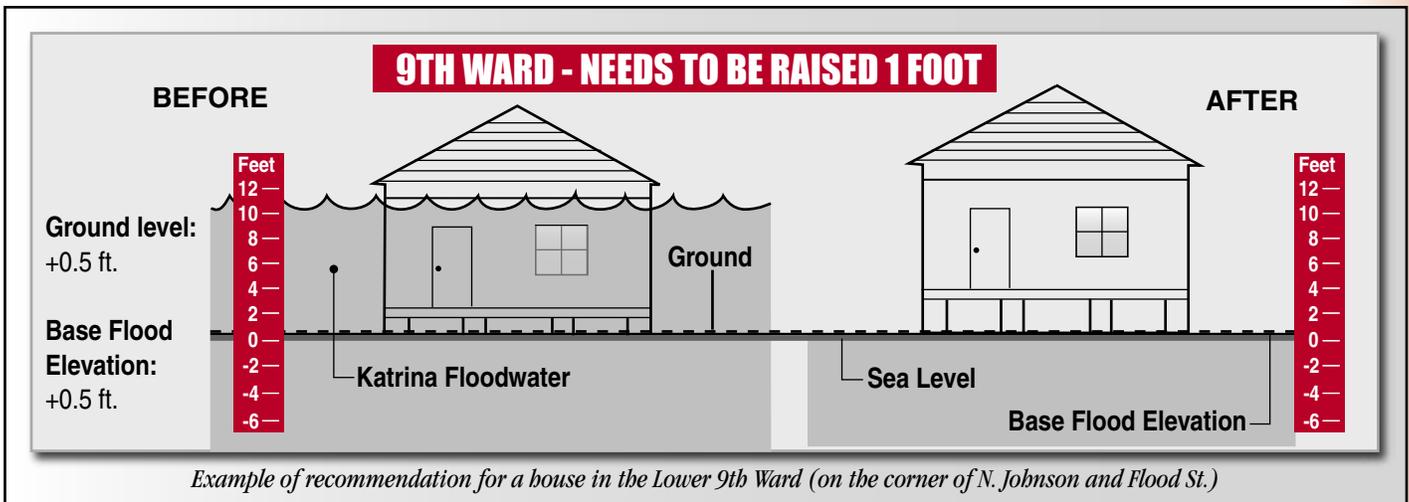
“New Orleans residents can now move forward with their lives and make tough decisions about rebuilding with the release of the FEMA advisory flood maps,” he said. “I am pleased that Mr. Powell and the White House are requesting the additional funds needed to certify our levees so that the maps could be made available for our citizens to start rebuilding their homes and their lives.”

He also noted that the new federal guidelines do not restrict rebuilding in any part of New Orleans – meaning that the rebuilding decisions

will be left to local officials and residents. With this advisory, FEMA is saying that new flood insurance policies and federal rebuilding assistance should be available to those who rebuild within the specified guidelines, in any part of the city. “I urge city officials to make the same commitment to all neighborhoods in New Orleans, now that federal officials are certifying all areas to be safe for rebuilding under the new guidelines.”

While the maps do provide more certainty, Jefferson points out the need for continued funding for the levees, more definite requirements from FEMA and more federal support. “I will continue to fight in Congress for the citizens of New Orleans and Louisiana. The road to recovery is only beginning and there is much more that needs to be done. I will continue to urge my colleagues to see the area, first-hand, so that they may understand how large our needs truly are.”

For more information on FEMA flood requirements, please visit www.fema.gov. ■



Jefferson Fights for Louisiana Firms in FEMA Contracting

Congressman Jefferson is fighting to change FEMA's contracting practices. Upon learning that FEMA did not awarding more contracts to Louisiana firms in the re-bidding process, he demanded a meeting with FEMA Director David Paulison.

“I received assurances from FEMA procurement and contracting officials – in four separate meetings in my Washington office as well as during a House Select Committee on Katrina investigative hearing – that the re-bidding process would result in awarding all of the contracts to Louisiana firms, with special consideration for disadvantaged businesses,” he noted. “This contracting process, with its loopholes and vague language, has resulted in a loss of jobs for Louisiana citizens. FEMA's irresponsible behavior and broken promises are unacceptable. We need contracts to go to Louisiana firms, who employ Louisiana's workers, to engage our economy and put our residents to work so that they can come home and rebuild their lives.

Jefferson said that he expects FEMA Director David Paulison to ensure that the re-bidding process does what it is supposed to do: award all contracts to Louisiana firms and put our people to work. “There are enough firms in this state to do the work necessary and we cannot disregard them,” he said. ■



Jefferson joins President Bush, as he signs the GO Zone Act into law. Also pictured from left to right, Homeland Security Chief Michael Chertoff, Senator Max Baucus (MT), Senator Trent Lott (MS), Rep. Jim McCrery (LA), and Recovery Czar Don Powell.



Healthcare Needs Remain Unmet

New Orleans and the metro area are facing a serious healthcare crisis. Congress has not yet addressed the healthcare needs

of our area and it shows. Our hospitals are suffering; healthcare for our elderly and disabled is nearly unavailable. We don't have enough hospital beds, healthcare professionals or service providers, and no Level-1 trauma centers.

Therefore, I am requesting \$300 million for New Orleans-area hospitals to be allocated to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to award Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grants to public hospitals, non-profit entities, and Medicare and Medicaid eligible suppliers and other healthcare suppliers for healthcare related expenses, property damage, or lost revenues from disaster-related public health emergencies.

Thirty-two days after 9/11, Congress appropriated \$147 million in HRSA grants for an "expected" healthcare crisis. Now, we have an ongoing and urgent healthcare crisis affecting nearly a million people in and around the New Orleans metro area with no funds appropriated to meet their needs urgently and directly.

That's also why I introduced the Katrina Health Access, Recovery and Empowerment (KHARE) Act of 2006. The bill, co-sponsored by 31 Members, seeks to address the healthcare issues that have arisen since Hurricane Katrina destroyed the healthcare system in the Gulf region.

This is the first in a series of healthcare bills that I will be introducing in the coming weeks. The KHARE Act of 2006 is designed to fix our crisis comprehensively by providing assistance in four areas of healthcare where the need is greatest as follows:

Rebuilding the Health Care Infrastructure. Directs the Department of Health and Human Services to provide forgivable, low-interest loans to small businesses to restore health care services, extends tax-credits for medical malpractice insurance to health professionals in the Hurricane Katrina-affected area, offers grants to non-profit hospitals

and clinics to defray medical malpractice insurance costs, and allows some healthcare professionals affected areas to deduct 125 percent of their medical liability premiums paid from their gross income.

Rebuilding Pipelines of Providers in Medically-Needy and Underserved Areas and Communities. Establishes a Healthcare Safety Net Infrastructure Trust Fund to provide federal guarantees of repayment of refinancing loans thereby making loans to eligible healthcare facilities for healthcare facility replacement, modernization and renovation projects, and capital equipment purchases.

Providing Relief to Academic Institutions. This provision provides support to healthcare related Academic programs and institutions in affected areas so that they may retain health care-related staff and personnel, and continue to offer programs that will boost the health care workforce in hurricane-affected areas.

Restoring Key Components of the Health Care Infrastructure in Medically-Needy and Medically-Underserved Areas. Provides grants and technical assistance to low-income communities with noted health disparities, to implement programs focused on improving healthcare and offers disaster relief Medicaid expanding access to care for low-income hurricane-affected residents.

After Katrina, the Louisiana State University Health Services Division was forced to lay off thousands of doctors, nurses and other profes-



sionals as their New Orleans facilities closed due to the extensive damage they suffered. Ochsner Clinic Foundation is now caring for the uninsured and indigent patients that the LSU Health Services Division previously managed through University and Charity Hospitals; however, they do not have the infrastructure in place to continue. Rebuilding the healthcare infrastructure is also an important component to the overall economic development in the region, as the reinstatement of those jobs lost could provide a much-needed boost for the city's tax base.

This bill and the \$300 million request set in place the framework needed to implement sound public health and healthcare practices and it is the start to a new direction for healthcare in the Gulf Coast region.

*Congressman William Jefferson
2113 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515
Official Business*

*M.C.
PRSRT STD
ECRWSS*

*Resident Postal Patron
2nd District
Louisiana*