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THE WHITE HOUSE
PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

[Home](#) > [News & Policies](#) > [August 2007](#)

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Office of the Press Secretary
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Fact Sheet: The Two-Year Anniversary of Hurricane Katrina

The Federal Government Is Fulfilling Its Commitment To Help The People Of The Gulf Coast Rebuild

- [President Bush Visits Mississippi, Discusses Rebuilding Efforts](#)
- [President Bush Meets with New Homeowners in New Orleans](#)
- [President Bush Discusses Rebuilding Efforts in New Orleans](#)
- [In Focus: Gulf Coast Rebuilding](#)

Today, President And Mrs. Bush Are Visiting Louisiana And Mississippi To Review These States' Progress In Rebuilding From The Unprecedented Devastation Of Hurricane Katrina.

- **Louisiana:** Last night, President and Mrs. Bush had dinner with cultural and community leaders at Dooky Chase, a famous New Orleans restaurant that has been closed since Hurricane Katrina but is scheduled to reopen in a couple of weeks. This morning, they will visit Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School for Science and Technology, the first public school to reopen in New Orleans' Lower Ninth Ward, where they will meet with Louisiana education officials. They will remain at the school for a moment of silence to mourn the lives lost during Hurricane Katrina.
- **Mississippi:** In Mississippi, the President and Mrs. Bush will be briefed by State and local elected officials and community leaders on rebuilding efforts. The President will then make a statement in front of the U.S. 90 Bridge between Bay Saint Louis and Pass Christian, Mississippi. This bridge was completely destroyed by Hurricane Katrina, but two lanes of the bridge were opened to traffic in May 2007, and the project is scheduled for completion in late January 2008.

The Federal Government Is Meeting Its Commitment To Assist Gulf States In Their Rebuilding Efforts

The Federal Government Has Provided More Than \$114 Billion In Resources – \$127 Billion Including Tax Relief – To The Gulf Region.

- **Over \$96 Billion Of The \$114 Billion (84 Percent) Either Has Been Disbursed Or Is Available For States To Draw From.** The Federal government plans to obligate every dollar – the funds are there and ready to be used, and we are working with State and local leaders to help them take advantage of the remainder of this funding to rebuild the region.
- **Over The Past Year, \$24 Billion In Federal Funds Have Been Spent To Rebuild The Gulf States And To Further Assist Hurricane Victims.** Federal dollars have been used to

build houses and schools, repair damaged infrastructure, and provide victims with a place to live and other essential assistance as the region continues to get back on its feet.

Restoring And Improving New Orleans Levees

The Administration Has Secured \$7.1 Billion From Congress For The U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers To Repair And Enhance The Levees, Make The Entire Hurricane Protection System Better And Stronger, And Begin To Restore The Wetlands Surrounding The Greater New Orleans Area.

- **Today, The New Orleans Area Has The Best Flood Protection In History, And Work Continues On Improvements.** All damages to pre-Katrina infrastructure have been repaired, and in many places, the system is now better than before Hurricane Katrina struck:
 - Most of the damaged I-wall construction floodwalls have been replaced with T-walls that have stronger foundations.
 - The most vulnerable floodwalls have been armored to protect against erosion.
 - Most transition points between levees have been strengthened.
 - Thirty-six miles of new levees and floodwalls have been rebuilt and restored to original design height.
 - Floodgates have been added to protect outfall canals that drain water from the city to Lake Pontchartrain.
- **In His FY 2009 Budget, President Bush Will Request The Federal Share Of The Additional \$7.6 Billion Needed To Complete These Improvements.** This funding will allow the Army Corps of Engineers to complete its work to improve storm and flood protection infrastructure in Greater New Orleans to a 100-year protection level by 2011. It will also fund a \$1.3 billion network of interior drainage projects to ensure the area has a more complete hurricane protection system.

Helping To Reopen Schools And Educate Students

The U.S. Department Of Education Provided \$2 Billion To Help Local Officials Reopen K-12 And Postsecondary Schools Along The Gulf Coast And Educate Students Displaced By Hurricanes. In addition, FEMA has obligated more than \$1.2 billion to Louisiana for school buildings across the state, and Mississippi has received approximately \$300 million for education facilities.

- **The Education Department Has Provided \$45 Million To Help Louisiana Open Or Reopen Charter Schools.** Charter schools are allowing for more flexibility, greater accountability, and better results for New Orleans' students.

Since The Gulf Coast School Library Recovery Initiative Began In May 2006, The Laura Bush Foundation For America's Libraries Has Awarded More Than \$2.5 Million To 54 Gulf Coast Schools. These grants are helping schools re-establish book collections in libraries damaged or destroyed by the 2005 hurricanes. The Laura Bush Foundation for America's libraries was officially launched in 2002 as a fund of the Community Foundation for the National Capital Region.

Meeting Housing Needs

The Administration Has Provided A Total Of \$16.7 Billion In Federal Funds As Part Of The Largest Housing Recovery Program In U.S. History. Of these funds, provided under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) program, more than \$10.4 billion has been allocated for Louisiana, of which the State has expended \$3.7 billion. Mississippi has been allocated \$5.5 billion, of which approximately \$1.5

billion has been expended. HUD is working with State leaders to help target these funds, allowing States to draw down funds quickly after submitting plans. HUD continues to carefully monitor the use of these Federal dollars and ensure States are complying with the law.

- **Louisiana Has Chosen To Allocate \$7.8 Billion Of Its CDBG Funding To Help Displaced Homeowners And Renters Through The State's Road Home Program.** To date, more than \$3.4 billion of those funds have been spent to assist over 42,000 homeowners.
- **Louisiana Is Allocating An Additional \$1.6 Billion To Support Critical Infrastructure Needs And To Promote Economic Development.**
- **In Addition, HUD Is Also Working With The Housing Authority Of New Orleans, Which Was Under HUD Receivership Prior To Katrina, To Build New Mixed-Income Communities.** These communities are better, safer, and provide more opportunities for residents than prior housing developments that concentrated poverty.
- **Mississippi Is Allocating \$3.4 Billion In CDBG Funding To Assist Homeowners And Renters.** Homeowner grants under the first phase of Mississippi's program have now been paid to 87 percent of eligible applicants, for a total of approximately 13,636 grants amounting to nearly \$1 billion in disbursed homeowner assistance funds.
- **Mississippi Is Also Using An Additional \$640 Million In CDBG Funding To Rebuild Infrastructure And \$100 Million To Repair Damaged Public Housing.**

Over 2,000 HUD-Owned Homes And 76,035 Units In HUD-Assisted Or HUD-Insured Multifamily Properties (Apartment Buildings) Have Been Repaired And Leased To Displaced Families Since Hurricanes Katrina And Rita. HUD has also provided Disaster Vouchers to 28,000 previously HUD-assisted or homeless families. In September, HUD will take over the FEMA apartment program, which will continue to provide rental assistance to approximately 45,000 households.

Additional Assistance Is Being Provided For Mississippi And Louisiana Homeowners And Businesses

The Small Business Administration Has Disbursed \$6 Billion In Low-Cost Disaster Loans To Homeowners, Renters, And Business Owners Along The Gulf Coast.

Gulf Opportunity Zone (GO Zone) Tax Credits And Other Tax Relief Has Provided \$12.7 Billion In Tax Relief For Victims Of The 2005 Hurricanes. In 2005, the President signed the GO Zone Act to help create jobs and spur development by providing tax relief for businesses and entrepreneurs in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. The President signed legislation in December 2006 to extend vital provisions of this act.

The U.S. Department Of Justice (DOJ) Has Provided More Than \$86 Million To Support Louisiana And The City Of New Orleans In Their Efforts To Fight Violent Crime And Rebuild Their Criminal Justice Systems. Nearly \$30 million was disbursed to the New Orleans area for personnel costs, vehicles, prison beds, generators, office equipment, riot gear, ammunition, and miscellaneous equipment to shore up local law enforcement, the court system, and District Attorney's office.

Historic Volunteer Efforts Have Shown The Compassion Of The American People

In The Two Years Following Hurricane Katrina, More Than 1.1 Million Americans Have Volunteered To Help With Gulf Coast Response And Rebuilding Efforts. The number of

volunteers in the second year of Katrina recovery exceeded the historic number of volunteers in the recovery's first year – the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) reports that 600,000 Americans volunteered to help rebuild the Gulf in the second year following Hurricane Katrina, up from the historic number of more than 550,000 in the year after the hurricane struck.

- **Since Hurricane Katrina, Over 93,000 Participants In Corporation For National And Community Service Programs Have Given More Than 3.5 Million Hours Of Service And Managed 262,000 Volunteers.** CNCS has provided more than \$130 million of resources to the Gulf Coast in response to Katrina.

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