

the **JEFFERSON**

REPORT



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Getting the 5.7 Billion In Road Home Grants

Congress has added three billion dollars to finance the 5.7 billion shortfall of the Road Home grants used to fund the return of many Louisiana residents. The funds were attached to the Defense Appropriations bill in conference.

The state has pledged one billion to the shortfall and 1.2 billion will come from the Hazard Mitigation fund appropriated in June. The three billion in new funds will leave the program only 400 million short.

With the support and assistance of Congressman Jefferson, in mid-October, Governor Kathleen Blanco and Mayor C. Ray Nagin traveled to Washington, D.C. to discuss the needs of Road Home with the Louisiana members of Congress, House of Representatives Democratic Caucus, Congressional Black Caucus, Senate leadership and the White House. At the press conference following some of these meetings, Governor Blanco, Mayor Nagin, and Congressmen Jefferson and Melancon were encouraged and determined to get the money Road Home needs to continue to get homes rebuilt and affordable housing units replaced.

"I am confident of the commitment of Congress. Our job is to convince the White House to agree to the billions we need to complete the Road Home grants. We expect this to be done before Congress goes home this year," Congressman Jefferson stated.



Congressman Jefferson leads Road Home grant efforts with Governor Kathleen Blanco, mayor Nagin and Representative Charles Melancon.

Funds For Drainage, Levee Improvements and Hurricane Protection in Water Resources Development Act

For the first time in five years the House and the Senate recently passed and presented to the President, the Water Resources Development Act 2007 (WRDA 2007) that establishes and continues programs to sustain the safety of the New Orleans area and the Louisiana coastline.

WRDA provides almost two billion dollars for an all-inclusive program to restore the Louisiana coastline and protect the city of New Orleans, other southern Louisiana communities and oil and gas structures.

It authorizes the Corps of Engineers to elevate and improve flood protection levees surrounding the New Orleans area to reach 100-year levels of protection and address the drainage canals that were a contributing factor to the severe flooding of the city. And, very significantly, it directs the Corps

to accelerate the closure of the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet and the canal—an identified key factor that quickened the storm surge and flooding during Hurricane Katrina, especially in the Lower Ninth Ward and St. Bernard Parish.

Additionally, the bill authorizes the National Academy of Science to identify the causes and sources of coastal degradation. Projects will also be mounted to recover from past storm damage and to reduce storm damage and restore the ecosystem and environment in Louisiana for the future. "The President has vetoed the WRDA bill as too expensive. But this ignores the tremendous costs involved in the risk of not being prepared for hurricanes to come. I voted to override the President's veto," Jefferson declared.

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Congressional Leadership Visits the Gulf Coast

To assess the two-year recovery efforts made and those still to be done in New Orleans and the rest of the Gulf Coast, the Democratic leadership, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Majority Whip James Clyburn, and a large number of members were invited by Congressman Jefferson to make the visit.

The trip, from August 12-14, focused on the promises made which have been kept during the first half of the 110th session of Congress. Members made a comprehensive survey of the outstanding needs in the areas of education, housing, health care and infrastructure. The policymakers held a conference with state and local officials, visited the Lower Ninth Ward, Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary and the Sewage and Water Board of New Orleans and toured the St. Bernard Health Center and the New Orleans levee system.

“House leaders were able to renew their commitment to the Gulf Coast by not only hearing the issues from a third party source but by walking and seeing the struggles endured daily by our resilient people,” said Jefferson.



Relaying the successes and the tasks still to be done, Congressman Jefferson speaks at a press conference with Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and other Congressional leaders in New Orleans.

Committed to the Gulf Coast Recovery

In recognition of the second anniversary of Hurricane Katrina and Rita, Congressman William Jefferson passed a resolution by which Congress acknowledged the damage caused by the two hurricanes, the work done by the the government and our people, and committed itself to continue to support the recovery of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast region.

“This puts the Congress on record to continue to support our recovery,” Jefferson said after the vote.

Loyola Post Office Named to Honor Veterans

On October 15, 2007 to honor the contributions of Louisiana’s veterans, Congressman Jefferson passed a resolution unanimously in the House to rename the post office at 701 Loyola Ave., the Louisiana Armed Services Veterans Post Office. Previously, the post office was named New Orleans Main Service Window.

“Louisiana is home to over 370,000 veterans that have defended our country on many levels in and in many wars,” said Jefferson said in addressing the House. “The post office will now be a reminder of all of the sacrifices made daily by the men and women of the armed services who volunteered to take on the defense of this nation with courage and humility.”

Several historic figures in the armed services have been reared in Louisiana. Sherian Grace Cadoria, the first black woman to earn her stars as a U.S. Army

general was born in Marksville, La and graduated from Southern University in Baton Rouge. Lt. General Russel L. Honore, of Opelousas, is the commanding general of the U.S. First Army in Ft. Gillem, Georgia and coordinated military relief efforts for Hurricane Katrina afflicted areas around the Gulf Coast.

The military installations of Louisiana, Barksdale Air Force Base in Bossier City, the Ft. Polk Joint Readiness Training Center near Leesville, Belle Chasse Naval Facility and the Jackson Barracks in New Orleans are integral parts of our state and continuously support the veterans of Louisiana.

“The state of Louisiana has contributed mightily to each branch of our armed services and by extension to the defense of this nation...and it is only appropriate that we memorialize them in this significant way,” Jefferson declared.

Honoring District Veterans

In a tribute on Veterans’ Day, Congressman Jefferson held a memorial and celebration of the contributions of district veterans at the newly minted Louisiana Armed Services Veterans’ Post Office. He spoke about the importance of veterans in securing our freedom.

“The sacrifices made by those standing before me today and the veterans of the nation are beyond measure. They are the selfless acts upon which our nation is built and our freedoms are sustained. It is a tremendous honor to stand with all of you today,” said Jefferson in his remarks at the service.



A Vote to Extend and Expand the National Flood Insurance Program

The Flood Insurance Reform and Modernization Act, H.R. 3121 passed in the House of Representatives after the August recess and aims to create a better flow of information and services from the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program.

“Flood insurance was the most reliable resource available to many victims of Hurricane Katrina and Rita,” Jefferson reasoned. “Its extension is crucial to our area.”

The program initially was created in 1968 by Congressional legislation that allows for communities to opt into Federal Government flood insurance. To do so communities must agree to enforce floodplain management plans to minimize future flood risk and damage. National Flood Insurance Program is designed to help before flood damage—an alternative to disaster aid after the fact. They map floodplains, offer management tools and offers flood insurance to those communities engaged in its programs.

H.R. 3121 requires lending institutions to notify buyers of flood insurance availability and increases the penalties in cases of no notification and authorizes grants from FEMA for outreach to encourage those living in

flood hazard areas to purchase flood insurance. It also states that demolition of property and rebuilding are eligible for assistance and amends the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 to allow for multi-coverage for property from flood and wind.

“The next step is to federally authorize all perils insurance to cover losses of hurricane victims whether covered by wind or water. But this bill is a necessary step to keep current flood disaster provisions in place.”

The legislation is now under review in the Senate.

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Jena 6 Hearing

At a Judiciary Committee hearing on the Jena 6, Congressman Jefferson listens to witness testimony with Congressman Donald Payne. Earlier he had traveled to Jena to work toward a fair resolution of the issues there.



Dillard Gets Support To Expand Nursing Program

At the request of Congressman Jefferson, the Labor HHS Appropriations bill passed in the House in July with 200,000 dollars provided for Dillard University for use within its widely known nursing program. The funds will help in the recruitment and training of nursing assistants to and through the schools programs.

Dillard’s nursing program was established in 1942 as the fifth academic division at Dillard and has



been nationally accredited since 1956. It was the first National League for Nursing accredited program in the state of Louisiana.

“Nursing shortages in our state have been epidemic. This helps to open wider the pipeline that supplies new nurses to our state,” said Jefferson.

The Appropriations bill goes to the Senate for a vote and then to the President for his signature.

Jefferson Introduces Bill to Exempt Road Home Grants From Taxation

“It makes no sense for the federal government to give, on the one hand, to support victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and take away on the other,” Jefferson said upon introducing his bill. “The federal government has not made our people whole from the huge losses from the storms, losses largely caused by the incompetent design and construction of our levee system by an agency of the federal government, the Corps of Engineers. So, to tax the Road Home grants is something we cannot permit to happen.”



Top of the Hill: SCHIP, A Failed Opportunity

In 2004, the number of poor children living in Louisiana was 343,256 or 30 percent of all children in the state. Forty-seven percent of all African-American children were classified as poor; as were 26 percent of American Indian children; 23 percent of Asian children and 24 percent of Latino children.

The SCHIP program provides health insurance to the impoverished children of our nation. After Hurricane Katrina, coverage for those then enrolled in Louisiana SCHIP, called LaCHIP in Louisiana, was not transferred over state lines, leaving many of the families who evacuated to some other place without the health care they so desperately needed. Thirty-three percent of Katrina evacuees received Medicaid, compared to 41 percent before the storm. And, only 11 percent used SCHIP, compared to 23 percent of those who remained in Louisiana. Indeed, since 2005, 81,000 kids have lost their health insurance coverage in our state.

Louisiana's gap between poor children needing healthcare and those having a way to pay for it is very large. I was proud to vote for recent legislation H.R. 3162 that would have gone a long way toward curing this problem. Of the 149,000 uninsured children in Louisiana, H.R. 3162 would have provided coverage for 110,000 of them or 74 percent of those currently uninsured. Despite bi-partisan support, H.R. 3162 was vetoed by the President. With this, a golden chance was lost to provide needy children of our state access to preventive care—to check their vision, to examine their teeth, to prevent and treat childhood disease and to pay for the ever increasing costs of medicine and hospitalizations. Healthy children translate to children who are productive in school, better adjusted socially and safer at play.

I am determined to continue to fight to recover this failed opportunity for the children and working families of our state. For I believe, as former President Nelson Mandela said: "There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children." I look forward to our working together to make sure that we treat our children, the most vulnerable and most valued amongst us, in a way worthy of our great nation.

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