

September 5, 2007

U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

The Honorable Junior Rodriguez  
Parish President  
8201 West Judge Perez Drive  
Chalmette, LA 70043



Office of the Federal Coordinator  
for Gulf Coast Rebuilding

Dear President Rodriguez:

It was good to see you a few weeks ago at your office. I appreciated your candid feedback on the issues affecting St. Bernard Parish. With this milestone behind us, my office continues to press on with the work before us: to support your efforts to accelerate the rebuilding and renewal of St. Bernard.

As we discussed, we are committed to ensuring that the Federal Government provides coordinated, effective, and appropriate support to you and the other local leaders that must drive this rebuilding effort. I strive constantly to improve the performance of all Federal efforts and to ensure that Federal dollars translate into tangible results.

I know that concerns persist regarding Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) public infrastructure funding. While this is a shared partnership between the Federal, State, and local governments, we are committed to ensuring that the Federal Government meets its responsibilities in our ongoing effort to help drive various project worksheets to completion.

Toward that end, I ask you to please outline the five public assistance projects of highest priority to the City. At our meeting, we discussed the challenges with 1) the sewer and water system 2) Parish vehicles and equipment and 3) Parish buildings. Please provide relevant details on these issues and any additional projects of highest priority. As I committed to you, I will work closely with you, FEMA, and other relevant State and/or local agencies to seek resolution on these projects in an expeditious manner. Within thirty days of receiving your request, our goal is to identify the barriers that prevent us from reaching a decision and/or action on these projects. Please also identify the member of your staff that is the most appropriate point of contact on this going forward.

Thank you for your cooperation, and I look forward to continuing our work together on behalf of the people of St. Bernard Parish.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donald E. Powell".

Donald E. Powell  
Federal Coordinator for Gulf Coast Rebuilding

cc: Governor Kathleen Blanco, State of Louisiana  
cc: Councilwoman Judy Darby Hoffmeister  
cc: Councilman Joseph S. DiFatta, Jr.