

The Gulf Coast Housing Recovery Act of 2007

June 15, 2007

The Gulf Coast Housing Recovery Act of 2007, introduced by Senators Dodd and Landrieu, will ensure that families of all income levels can come back to the Gulf Coast, and will help jump-start development in the Gulf. The Bill does the following:

Brings People Home:

- Ensures homeowners in Louisiana can rebuild their homes by authorizing funds to cover the shortfall in the Road Home program.
- Provides former public housing residents the opportunity to come home.
- Provides counseling to families with housing vouchers so they can obtain suitable housing.

Replaces Lost Housing:

- Ensures there is no net loss of affordable housing opportunities by requiring that any public housing or other HUD-assisted housing in the Gulf is replaced.
- Authorizes appropriations for the repair and rehabilitation of public housing in the Gulf Coast.
- Provides additional affordable housing opportunities by authorizing funding for 4,500 supportive housing vouchers, and an additional 1,000 housing units for the homeless.

Creates Homeownership Opportunities:

- Requires FHA to use pre-hurricane credit history in determining a borrower's eligibility for FHA insurance so households who have faced financial difficulties as a result of the storms are still able to become homeowners.
- Requires any properties under HUD's control within the City of New Orleans be transferred to the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority for low-income homeownership opportunities.

Spurs Community Development:

- Provides \$20 million from previously appropriated funds to the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority, and \$20 million for other parishes, to acquire land for redevelopment.
- Assists the development of Low Income Housing Tax Credit projects by requiring the Housing Authority of New Orleans to work to provide long term subsidies to help serve low-income families in these developments.

Continues Assistance for Evacuees:

- Requires continued rental assistance for evacuees and transfers funding from FEMA to HUD to provide rental assistance to families still in need of temporary housing.
- Assists families in moving out of unhealthy living environments by authorizing funding for rental assistance for families currently living in FEMA trailers.

Requires Accountability:

- Requires HUD to petition a court for judicial receivership of the troubled Housing Authority of New Orleans, so that the housing agency is an independent partner in redevelopment.
- Requires all states that received emergency federal funds to report on the use of those funds, including information on who is served in each state, and requires HUD to monitor expenditures of emergency funds to prevent waste, fraud and abuse.
- Authorizes funding for fair housing enforcement, to ensure that families are treated fairly and are not subject to discrimination.