

We have all been moved by the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina, and we must now all pull together to help those who are facing the greatest challenges in their attempts to recover and respond to Katrina's wake. In times of hardship, Americans come together to help each other. Time is of the essence, and each of us must do what we can to respond to this natural catastrophe.

Once the deadly threat posed by Hurricane Katrina became apparent, Democratic Leader NANCY PELOSI publicly called for a special session of Congress to get to work and send relief to the victims struggling in the Gulf Coast. I was pleased that Republican leadership finally answered Leader PELOSI's call and convened the U.S. Congress to pass a \$10.5 billion emergency supplemental spending bill for the people suffering in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama.

Today we will pass an additional \$51.8 billion in the Second Emergency Supplemental for Hurricane Katrina. While these funds are much needed they are coming before us today on the suspension calendar which does not allow us adequate time for debate or an opportunity to add important amendments. Hurricane Katrina is clearly the worst natural disaster in U.S. history, and we are missing the opportunity to address some critical issues, such as creating a commission to investigate the federal response to this disaster and making FEMA an independent agency.

Mr. Speaker, the Congress must provide leadership in helping those displaced by the hurricane to rebuild their lives and communities out of the wreckage left in Katrina's wake. In the weeks and months ahead, Congress will consider additional spending measures to aid victims of the hurricane. As Americans, we have pulled together through tragedies in the past, and I know that we will demonstrate that same unity in overcoming the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAVID DREIER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 8, 2005

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, as you know, on the afternoon of September 7th, I was in New York at the United Nations formally thanking the international delegates on behalf of the House of Representatives for their support and assistance in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Over 90 countries have offered to help us recover from this natural disaster, and I was privileged to have the opportunity to thank the international community on your behalf.

As a result of my presentation in New York, I was unfortunately unable to be present for two recorded votes that day. Had I been present, I would like the record to reflect that I would have voted "aye" on H.R. 3169, to provide the Secretary of Education with waiver authority for students who are eligible for Pell grants who are adversely affected by a natural disaster. I likewise would have voted "aye" on H.R. 3650, to allow United States courts to conduct business during emergency conditions.

THE NEW ORLEANS CRIME VICTIMS DESERVE COMPENSATION

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 8, 2005

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of those who demand a more detailed legislative effort. Official criminal neglect is the crime of New Orleans. First response neglect is the immediate and short-term crime. Our government should've responded faster with more. Long-term crime caused by partisan politics, the greed of powerful selfish legislators who lack compassion, the looting of billions from the Federal treasury for the wrong reasons, the institutionalized prejudices against big cities; all of these evils have festered over the years to produce the highly visible, horrifying gangrene of the New Orleans disaster.

Congress and the President deserve high praise for the emergency appropriations. But this allotment is for the weeks and months ahead. On day one of this disaster the U.S. already had all of the resources necessary to achieve the safer, faster and more thorough rescue of the desperate population of New Orleans. Criminal incompetence and some contempt for the stranded population blocked the perceptions of how to speedily mobilize resources. In 1940 at Dunkirk, under heavy fire from German forces, more than 300,000 British troops were rescued and ferried back to England. Success was achieved because Winston Churchill immediately understood the gravity of the situation and called for the mobilization of every vehicle that could float. The crime and the pity is that all of the helicopter and naval craft marvels of our military were not immediately ordered to blanket the flooded neighborhoods of New Orleans.

Decades of debate and refusals to seriously address an obviously dangerous set of circumstances facing one of America's great cities is the long-term crime at the heart of this involuntary manslaughter. For decades Washington refused to finance state of the art technology to lessen the dangers of flooding in New Orleans. In recent years the Bush administration has compounded the problem by cutting already inadequate budgets.

Since we refused to shield this crime victim from the life-threatening assault that has now been perpetrated, the bleeding New Orleans deserves maximum compensation. The Hurricane Katrina emergency appropriation is a promising beginning. To accomplish its purpose the provisions of the legislation must be expanded to include the following:

The establishment of a Right of Resettlement for all who want to return.

The immediate establishment of an Emergency Free Communications Network with cell phones for all refugee families.

The establishment of a Job Corps for able bodied refugees which mandates their priority hiring for jobs related to the cleanup and rebuilding.

The establishment of Faith and Community Based Family Resettlement Projects to assist in the relocation of refugee families.

The establishment of Family Resettlement Accounts for families who wish to relocate to some other part of the country.

The establishment of an Emergency College Student Temporary Resettlement Program utilizing Colleges that volunteer to receive students, faculty and administrators.

The provision of Impact School Aid for school districts where large numbers of refugee families are located.

A mandatory review and revamping of the Corps of Army Engineers Master Plan for New Orleans.

A federally funded initiative to establish "Fail Safe" Committees in local communities.

In summary, Congress must act immediately to specify how the Hurricane Katrina appropriation will be spent. There is a clear and present danger that billions will be contracted out to Haliburton type corporations and refugees will receive only a very meager benefit. We members of Congress must remain vigilant to guarantee that no more official crimes will be perpetrated against New Orleans.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PENTAGON 9/11 MEMORIAL RESOLUTION

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 8, 2005

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to be joined by my colleagues from Virginia, Maryland, D.C., Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey to introduce legislation recognizing the importance of a national memorial at the Pentagon to commemorate and mourn the terrorist attack against the Pentagon on September 11, 2001.

This legislation is modeled after a resolution (H. Res. 175) my friend and colleague from New York introduced earlier this year in support of efforts to create a September 11, 2001 memorial at the site of World Trade Center.

Mr. Speaker, as we approach the 4th anniversary of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, it is appropriate that we establish memorials at the sites of these attacks to honor the victims.

On that fateful day four years ago, the 59 victims of American Airlines Flight 77 and 125 military personnel and Defense Department employees at the Pentagon died and scores more were injured in a dastardly and unprovoked attack against the American people.

The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, have joined the pantheon of national tragedies and become a defining moment in United States history.

These attacks of September 11, 2001 affected all Americans, not only for the tragic loss of life, but also for its emotional toll on our public conscience. Two-thirds of Americans report that the attacks had a great emotional impact on them, and virtually all Americans can recall precisely where they were and what they were doing when they learned of the attacks.

And while all of us were beset by the tragic loss of life and untold suffering, we found solace in the inspiring and heroic actions taken by the crew and passengers of Flight 93 and by the firefighters, police officers, rescue workers, military personnel and ordinary citizens who raced to the scene of these attacks and saved lives, keeping the attacks from taking an even greater toll.

It was a tragic day, but a defining moment in our nation's history.

I applaud the efforts of those who have worked to build the memorials to honor and