

This woman here, who has had the roof ripped off her house and most of her possessions water damaged, FEMA's response to her is, you are on your own. Good luck.

And how about this family here. This woman is standing in water that is above her knees. The water is inside her house and has damaged her cars. Her house is not a fancy beach house. It is an average American's house. Her car is a later model and clearly more than 10 years old.

What was FEMA's response to her family's request for help? The same as it was to the people in New Orleans who were dying in the first days after Katrina struck: you are on your own.

My question to FEMA is this: Storms do not know State boundaries, so why does FEMA?

Looking at this picture here of the woman standing in her destroyed home, I am reminded of a woman that I met last week when touring hurricane damage in my own congressional district. I was touring the damage at the Park City Estates mobile home community in Davie, when I met Dorothy Rothbauer, an 86-year-old resident whose mobile home was damaged in Hurricane Katrina.

Ms. Rothbauer's home is roughly 20 miles from the beach. Her mobile home is nice. It is not extravagant. It is cozy and it has been her home for 25 years. Ms. Rothbauer is not a woman who lives beyond her means. She lives modestly and saves her money and has gotten by all of these years.

But now she needs help. She needs her government's help. As she showed me the damage to her house, she began to cry. It was excruciating. Pieces of the exterior have fallen off. Water has leaked in and the extent of structural damage is unknown.

She looked into my eyes, knowing that FEMA had told her that they could not offer her assistance, and crying, asked me what she was supposed to do now.

As I visited the other homes in the neighborhood, I realized that Dorothy's house did not have even as extensive damage as the others.

Across the street and down the block, roofs were entirely ripped off of these houses.

Dorothy's neighborhood is just one of many communities affected by Hurricane Katrina throughout Broward and Miami-Dade counties. And FEMA's answer to why they are not offering individual assistance to us in Florida is that for this storm FEMA has decided there is a State threshold of 800 homes that need to be damaged in Florida.

My State of Florida has been hit by six hurricanes, six in the past 2 years. Denying the people of Florida Federal assistance to rebuild their homes is wrong, and I urge my colleagues in the House to join the 25 Members from Florida in ensuring that FEMA will reimburse them for their damage.

The Census Bureau reports that in 2004, the percentage of people living in the Miami/

FL area in poverty was 17 percent. The Federal poverty level is, just \$12,334 for a family of two and only \$19,307 for a family of four. Denying the people of this area Federal aid in rebuilding their lives is unconscionable.

It is for this reason, Mr. Speaker, that today I am proud to introduce legislation that is co-sponsored by every member of Florida's House of Representatives delegation. All twenty-five Republicans and Democrats.

My legislation would direct FEMA to cover valid claims for individual assistance resulting from Hurricane Katrina's impact on the State of Florida.

This legislation does not ask for something unusual, it only asks to right the wrong done to the people of Florida and it allows us as a Nation to answer the tear-filled question of what am I supposed to do now, posed to me by Dorothy Rothbauer last week.

I urge my colleagues to co-sponsor my legislation that would extend relief to the Florida victims of Hurricane Katrina.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. EMANUEL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CUMMINGS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CORRINE BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman Williams, one of his secretaries.

IDEAS FOR A BETTER AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. TIAHRT. Madam Speaker, I will spend some time this afternoon talking about how we can keep and create jobs in America. For almost two centuries the American economy has been the envy of the world. With its dynamic, hardworking, motivated workforce America has truly been the land of opportunity where innovation has thrived. But that status is changing.

We are now running a \$670 billion annual deficit that is contributing to our

Federal budget deficit, and it has slowed our economy over the past few years. This development is not a temporary blip on the radar screen. It is the culmination of a generation of increased regulations, unsound tax policies, languishing emphasis on math and science, education, unchecked health care costs, rampant lawsuit abuse, unfocused research and development funds, and a weak trade policy enforcement system.

In short, our government has made it difficult and less desirable to keep businesses in America. Over the past generation we have put up roadblocks to keeping and creating jobs in America. If these current trends continue, our economy will continue to lag and will no longer remain the most dynamic economy in the world.

Meanwhile, countries like China and other nations are preparing for the future. They are educating their students in math, science and technology and pumping out record numbers of engineers. They are reducing tax rates and other economic barriers to entice investments into their nations. These countries are pursuing aggressive trade policies to reduce America's economic dominance in world trade.

Some of the examples are Ireland. Ireland has shifted from a Third World nation of Western Europe to the envy of the European Union largely due to its tax policies. The Celtic tiger has lowered its corporate tax rate to 12½ percent, stimulating the economy and creating jobs.

India was languishing under a burden of a socialist government; but now through their concerted effort to reduce regulations, they have stimulated their economy.

China currently graduates more English-speaking electrical engineers than America does. Their focus on education, especially math and science and technology, is allowing China to build their own Silicon Valley and attract the world's technological business to their doors.

Brazil has achieved what some believe to be a pipe dream. They are projected to be completely energy self-sufficient in a couple of years. It took them years to develop renewable energy sources, but now they are the leaders in ethanol production, and their economy is not suffering from the current high crude oil prices.

Chile is becoming an economic leader in Latin America by breaking down the barriers and doing business in their nation. Their emphasis on signing free trade agreements has been very fruitful. Last year they signed free trade agreements with the United States and with South Korea. They are currently in negotiations with China, India, New Zealand, Singapore, Japan and Australia; and they will continue to thrive.

For these reasons, these nations and other world economies are poised to move ahead of the United States in the next decade. In fact, the 2005 Index of Economic Freedom by the Heritage