The pain of those who lost loved ones, their homes, their pets, and who now find themselves in temporary housing, thousands of miles from home, their pain is palpable and every Floridian's heart goes out to them. However, I rise tonight to call the Nation's attention to something that I think has been overlooked, understandably, by the Nation, and that is the plight of those residents in Florida who suffered damage because of Hurricane Katrina.

Hurricane Katrina's first victim was Florida as it struck the Broward and Miami-Dade counties as a Category 1 storm on August 25, leaving hundreds of damaged or destroyed homes in its wake. Many of the farmers and agricultural workers that grow and tend these crops that were damaged will be out of jobs or will lose significant income this year as a result of this storm.

Craig Fugate, Florida's emergency management chief, told FEMA officials last week that the State expects the loss of over 2,000 farm-related jobs in Miami-Dade County alone. Okra, malanga, sweet potato and cassava crops have been destroyed, he said, resulting in about a $492 million loss.

That is why it came as a surprise to many homeowners in Florida when FEMA announced that it would not be providing individual assistance to residents of Florida who suffered damage as a result of Hurricane Katrina. I want to make it very clear what the effect of this decision means to the residents of South Florida who suffered damage in Hurricane Katrina.

This year, this is what FEMA will not pay for after Hurricane Katrina struck Florida. This woman here, who has had the roof ripped off her house and most of her possessions water damaged: FEMA's response to her, You are on your own, good luck.

How about this family here? This woman is standing in water up to her knees. Her cars are halfway submerged. These are not fancy cars. These are later model, 10-year-old cars. What was FEMA's response to her family's request for assistance? The same as it was to the people in New Orleans during the first days following Hurricane Katrina's aftermath when it hit the Gulf States: You are on your own.

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

FEMA has set an arbitrary and discretionary threshold of 800 homes that have been destroyed or badly damaged as a result of Hurricane Katrina. Let me reiterate this is a purely discretionary number. Title 44 in the Code of Federal Regulations states, ''There is no set threshold for recommending individual assistance.''

It is estimated that more than half of the residents who need assistance with storm recovery in Broward and Miami-Dade counties live on less than $20,000 a year. Yet FEMA denied Federal aid to those who qualified. Most of the mobile home residents in Broward impacted by Katrina are primarily uninsured or underinsured.

My State has been hit by six hurricanes over the past year and a half. This is a constant plague that the residents of Florida deal with, and the denial of aid to those in need is irresponsible and unconscionable.

I introduced legislation last week that calls on FEMA to provide the much-needed assistance to the residents of Florida who are victims of Hurricane Katrina. I plead with my colleagues, as we did today with the Katrina Tax Relief bill, let us make sure we do not turn our backs on the first victims of Hurricane Katrina and give help to those in need, regardless of State line.

VALLE VIDAL PROTECTION ACT OF 2005

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

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Valle Vidal Protection Act of 2005. The Valle Vidal is located in the heart of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains in northern New Mexico and is home to abundant populations of Rocky Mountain wildlife, including the largest herd of elk in our State. This ''living valley'' is an incredibly important ecological treasure whose value lies in its wilderness and natural beauty, not in its finite supply of energy.

The Valle Vidal is a special place for New Mexicans and people from around the world who come to relax in its alpine majesty and enjoy outdoor recreation and sporting opportunities. Boy Scouts from all over the country have come to the adjacent Philmont Scout Ranch for decades and each year spend thousands of hours doing conservation work and earning merit badges in the Valle Vidal.

Over the past 2 years, I have followed closely numerous events concerning the Valle Vidal. I have traveled to the Valle Vidal to witness its beauty, spoken with my constituents and others from the State, tracked political developments, and reviewed regulatory or policy initiatives undertaken by this administration. I have also received thousands of calls, e-mails, faxes, and letters against drilling and practically none in support of it. As a result, I have come to the inescapable conclusion that the Valle Vidal should be protected from oil and gas development.

The modern history of the Valle Vidal dates back to 1841 when Mexican Governor Manuel Armijo granted 1.7 million acres, the largest single landholding in the western hemisphere, to Guadalupe Miranda of Taos and a French trapper named Carlos Beaubien. This land grant, which included the 100,000 acre piece now known as Valle Vidal, is probably the most famous ever made by Mexico. It later became known as the Maxwell Land Grant after Lucien Bonaparte Maxwell, a Kansan who married Beaubien's daughter and later became the sole owner of the vast property.

Thirty years ago, the Pennzoil Company purchased nearly 500,000 acres of this land, which they used as a hunting park. Pennzoil maintained the area as such until 1982 when it donated a 100,000-acre parcel of it to the Federal Government, which was at the time the largest donation in Forest Service history. Interestingly, no drilling was ever done in the Valle Vidal when Pennzoil owned it. What an ironic travesty it would be for the government to now turn its back on this unique gift and allow the area to be blighted.

I do not want the Valle Vidal to be opened up for drilling. New Mexicans and thousands of Americans are overwhelmingly against drilling in the refuge. These concerned citizens realize that the Valle Vidal's minimal contribution to our energy needs now is not worth despoiling such an important ecological and watershed system. The consequences are just too great.

Moreover, many of my constituents, as confirmed by recent economic studies, recognize that the protection of special public lands like Valle Vidal is good for local economies; and, in fact, exploration of these places for a few hours of energy will hurt long-term economic growth and community sustainability.

Fundamentally, drilling in the Valle Vidal to create more energy is a false choice. We must consider alternative and more effective measures for solving our Nation's energy needs. For example, an increased use of renewable fuels and improved fuel efficiency standards would contribute greatly to solving many energy-related problems. The key is to make the best renewable and alternate energy systems competitive with today's nonrenewable sources of energy so they can be developed for use in the United States and even for sale abroad. We simply cannot hope to drill our way to energy independence. The fact that this special place is being targeted for oil and gas leasing radically demonstrates what is wrong with this administration's energy policies.

In this case, the Forest Service's commitment to a leasing environmental impact statement, before the agency has even prepared a forest plan amendment, demonstrates that legislative action is necessary to ensure that the Valle Vidal's nonmineral resources and values are given the attention and protection they deserve. Moreover, the Forest Service, even with irrefutable reason to do so, is without the legal authority to permanently protect this special place from mineral development.

New Mexico is home to a strong oil and gas industry which I openly support. I believe there are many places suitable for oil and gas drilling. Valle Vidal, however, is not one of them.

Mr. Speaker, to that end, today I am introducing the Valle Vidal Protection Act to permanently protect the Valle Vidal from mineral

extraction. In so doing, my legislation does not interfere with the Forest Service's Forest Plan Amendment process. That process is allowing the Forest Service to exercise its expertise and listen to the people and thereby establish a long-term management plan for the Valle Vidal commensurate with its importance as a critical component of our natural and cultural heritage. In my view, which I know is shared by many of my constituents, the Valle Vidal's ecological health and integrity should be restored and protected and enjoyed to the utmost by current and future generations.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues both in the New Mexico delegation as well as in the entire Congress to join me in passing this legislation and protecting the Valle Vidal permanently. This ecosystem is too valuable to the people of New Mexico and the nation, and the energy gains too miniscule to justify the potential damage to this pristine area. We must protect it.

VICENTE FOX, HURRICANE LOOTER

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

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, it seems tonight is the night for many of us to talk about the hurricane and the disastrous effects it has had on our country. I heard earlier a couple of my Democratic colleagues berating the majority leader about hurry up with money, hurry up and get it done.

We want to help our friends on the Gulf Coast, but it is also important that we do it sensibly and we pay some attention to the taxpayers here. Just yesterday, in Atlanta, one of the FEMA cards for $2,000 was used to buy a handbag. I guess you need a handbag if you are in dire straits, but this one was a Louis Vuitton, which does not mean much to me, except it was an $800 handbag. That is ludicrous. That is not what the American people expect for us to let happen.

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We will be rebuilding the gulf coast States for years to come. We will do so with both public and private moneys, with cost estimates now running into the hundreds of billions of dollars. Estimates are that at least a half million Americans from the affected areas have permanently lost their jobs as their workplaces are totally destroyed.

Mr. Speaker, we do want to help these people. We must help these people. It makes perfect sense that we ought to employ as many of these folks as possible in the rebuilding effort of the gulf coast. It is for their personal good we do that, and it is for the good of the country.

Last week, the President approved a temporary waiver of Davis-Bacon labor rules for exactly that purpose, to allow many of these individuals to participate in federally funded reconstruction projects as general labor helpers. They cannot do that under Davis-Bacon. We need to follow that up with providing whatever vocational training is necessary to allow displaced workers to gain the skills necessary to fully participate in these reconstruction efforts.

Let us do two things at once here.

We need a revival of the Civilian Conservation Corps from the 1930s for this unprecedented national emergency. We should offer every able-bodied displaced person an immediate training wage of $10 an hour on top of whatever other Federal benefits they may be receiving, and full-time participation in this if they are receiving Federal benefits should be mandatory for all except the elderly or disabled. People who can work and yet will not help themselves should not ask other taxpayers to do it for them. There is good-paying work here for years for every able-bodied American who needs a job if we do the right thing. This has a great potential to build careers.

But there is already somebody else with an eye for these construction jobs, Mexican President Vicente Fox. '''The reconstruction of that city,''' meaning New Orleans, '''and of that region is going to require a lot of labor,' Mr. Fox said of New Orleans, Mississippi, and Alabama. 'And if there is anything Mexicans are good at, it is construction.''' That is a quote from the New York Times, September 5.

While we appreciate the disaster aid assistance Mexico is providing by sending a military convoy across our southern border, we cannot afford to pay them back with American jobs of our hurricane victims. Rebuilding our gulf coast with labor from Mexico would divert a large part of the estimated $200 billion cost to rebuild, paid for by the American taxpayers, out of our economy and into ''foreign remittances,'' the monies sent back to Mexico from the United States by illegal immigrants. These ''remittances'' have now surpassed oil revenues as the number one source of income for Mexico. This is drawn directly out of our economy.

We should not allow our national tragedy to become Mexico's gain.

The time for talk should be over. The time for pleas for the administration to simply enforce the law should be over. Every police and sheriff's department in this Nation should begin vigorously enforcing immigration law while in the course of their routine duties. For every illegal worker not employed to rebuild the gulf coast, there is a ready job for the hundreds of thousands of legal American residents who just lost their jobs in this tragedy.

The CLEAR Act that we just reintroduced has an excellent chance of passing this session; and, if it does, the Federal Government will be responsible for paying 100 percent of these local law enforcement costs for immigration law enforcement efforts.

Hardship has a way of bringing families together. If there is anything positive that can come from such an incomprehensible disaster as Hurricane Katrina, it could likely be in forcing us to come back together to help defend each other, instead of letting potential taxpayer-funded jobs for storm victims to be looted by illegal immigrant labor cheered on by Mexican President Vicente Fox.

STATUS REPORT ON CURRENT SPENDING LEVELS OF ON-BUDGET SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FY 2005 AND THE 5-YEAR PERIOD FY 2005 THROUGH FY 2009

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

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker, I am transmitting a status report on the current levels of on-budget spending and revenues for fiscal year 2005 and for the five-year period of fiscal years 2005 through 2009. This report is necessary to facilitate the application of sections 302 and 311 of the Congressional Budget Act. This status report is current through September 2, 2005.

The term ''current level'' refers to the amounts of spending and revenues estimated for each fiscal year based on laws enacted or awaiting the President's signature.

The first table in the report compares the current levels of total budget authority, outlays, and revenues with the aggregate levels set forth by H. Con. Res. 95, the conference report on the budget resolution. This comparison is needed to enforce section 311(a) of the Budget Act, which creates a point of order against measures that would breach the budget resolution's aggregate levels. The table does not show budget authority and outlays for years after fiscal year 2005 because those years are not considered for enforcement of spending aggregates.

The second table compares, by authorizing committee, the current levels of budget authority and outlays for discretionary action with the ''section 302(a)'' allocations made under H. Con. Res. 95 for fiscal year 2005 and fiscal years 2005 through 2009. ''Discretionary action'' refers to legislation enacted after the adoption of the budget resolution. This comparison is needed to enforce section 302(f) of the Budget Act, which creates a point of order against measures that would breach the section 302(a) discretionary action allocation of new budget authority for the committee that reported the measure. It is also needed to implement section 311(b), which exempts committees that comply with their allocations from the point of order under section 311(a).

The third table compares the current levels of budget authority and outlays for discretionary appropriations for fiscal year 2005 with the total of ''section 302(b)'' suballocations among Appropriations subcommittees. The comparison is needed to enforce section 302(f) of the Budget Act, which creates a point of order against measures reported by the Appropriations Committee that would breach its section 302(a) discretionary action allocation of new budget authority.