

As winter approaches and deadlines for all displaced residents from Louisiana and Mississippi living in hotel rooms to be moved into temporary housing quickly approaching, this process must be streamlined. It is unacceptable for American citizens who lost their homes and everything they owned in the hurricane to still be sleeping in tents when FEMA has thousands of brand-new empty manufactured homes for occupancy.

Take a look here, Mr. Speaker. This is not in Hope, Arkansas. In fact, this is in my hometown of Prescott, Arkansas, some 16 miles away.

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Here is what is going on. They deliver the homes to this staging area in Hope, Arkansas, 450 miles from the gulf coast. And as they deliver them down the interstate, they have got a banner on the back that says, Urgent, FEMA delivery. Urgent for what? To deliver it to a cow pasture?

And a shingle blows off in transit. If one shingle is missing, they will not accept it at the FEMA staging area in Hope, Arkansas. So they turn around, drive back to my home town of Prescott, and they are leasing, literally leasing cow pastures, as you can see here, to store these homes until they can be repaired, while at the same time we have got families, we have got families, as Christmas approaches, as the holidays approach, sleeping in tents in Louisiana and Mississippi.

Dennis Ramsey, the Mayor of Hope, Arkansas, was quoted in the *Texarkana Gazette*, December 15, saying FEMA estimated that 12,000 mobile homes would be staged at the Hope site while FEMA leases the land at \$25,000 a month for the next 2 years.

The Associated Press said a FEMA spokesman said last week that 5,840 mobile homes and 80 travel trailers are at Hope and the Texarkana sites along with more than 4,400 mobile homes and 4,200 travel trailers at the other staging areas.

Mr. Speaker, I am asking this body, I am asking the acting director of FEMA: Please come to my home town, get these mobile homes and get them moved 450 miles down the road to the families who are living in tents and who so desperately need them in Mississippi and Louisiana.

TEXAS ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, a National Guard unit is coming back to Texas, because tomorrow, Saturday, December 17, the First Battalion, 133rd field artillery will be welcomed back to Beaumont, Texas, after serving the past year in Iraq.

In August 2004, the Texas Army National Guard deployed the 56th Brigade

Combat Team of the 36th Infantry Division to go to Iraq. They trained for 4 months in Ft. Hood, Texas, and got to Iraq in December of 2004. The 133rd Field Artillery has a longstanding history in this country. This was the first and famous Texas Army National Guard that served in France in World War I.

General John J. Pershing, the commander-in-chief of the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I made this comment about those Texans in World War I: He said, the bearing of the division in this its very first experience in battle showed the mettle of the officers and men and gave promise of what it would become. Members of this division who returned home can be proud of the record of their services.

Mr. Speaker, this was the first American combat unit to land in Europe in World War II. They landed on the beaches of Italy during World War II. They liberated Rome, then they went and landed on the beaches of France, went on to free the hostages of the concentration camps of Dachau, Germany.

Probably the most famous member of the 36th Texas is a person by the name of Audie Murphy. You may remember him, Mr. Speaker; he is from Hunt, Texas. And when he was a youngster, he joined the Army, the Army National Guard of Texas and became the first decorated soldier in the history of the American Army, winning among many other things the Congressional Medal of Honor.

And yet, the Texas 36th has continued that longstanding tradition in Iraq where they conducted offensive operations, deny and destroy operations, combat logistic patrols and civil military affair operations.

They built schools and hospitals and won the hearts of the Iraqi kids that they met along the way. They operated in the Sunni Triangle, Tikrit, Tillal, on the Jordanian border and in Bagdad. It is my pleasure to welcome them back when they come back home tomorrow.

I would like to extend a sincere thank you to all of the members of the 133rd, the men and women of the United States Armed Forces. They honor us with their commitment to Texas and the Nation, and the citizens of America and Iraq owe them a debt of gratitude. They are America's best. They are the sons and daughters of liberty. They are freedom fighters, and they make us proud.

I join the citizens of Texas Congressional District number two in paying the utmost respect for the 1st Battalion, 133rd Field Artillery. Through their service, Iraq has become a free democracy, and America remains the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Mr. Speaker, I had the chance in January of this year to go to Iraq to visit the very first elections, and I, with our military, and saw firsthand the accomplishments in their fight for freedom. You know, Mr. Speaker, freedom does have a price. Our troops are paying

that sacrificial price for the Iraqi people and for world freedom. Unfortunately, the 133rd lost six members during their fight for freedom, and I extend my prayers and our condolences to the family and friends. They were making a difference in the world when they gave their lives.

Their bravery and dedication and patriotism shall not be forgotten. That success is evident with the successful election of a new government in Iraq yesterday. President John Kennedy once said: The cost of freedom is always high. But Americans have always paid it. And one path we shall never choose, and that is the path of surrender or submission.

Mr. Speaker, we have chosen the right path. The hard path. The freedom path. We will persevere with the freedom-loving people of Iraq until the journey down this path is successfully completed.

The citizen soldiers of America, the Texas Army National Guard, have been warriors on the long hard sacrificial path of liberty. The world should never underestimate the resolve of America, the resolve and determination and will of the American soldier. Regardless of their mission for freedom, they always get it done. That is just the way it is.

AMERICA'S IMMIGRATION POLICIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, sometime ago, Mr. Speaker, President John F. Kennedy, himself the grandson of Irish immigrants, summed up this blend of the old and the new when he called America a society of immigrants, each of whom had begun life anew on an equal footing.

This is the secret of America, a Nation of people with a fresh memory of old traditions who dare to explore new frontiers. He further said: Everywhere immigrants have enriched and strengthened the fabric of American life.

And then Franklin Delano Roosevelt reminded us, remember, remember always, that all of us are descended from immigrants. I had hoped as we began our journey on a very important task, as reflected in the work we have done over the last 2 days, on border security and immigration reform, that we would have returned to our values, recognizing that this Nation is a Nation of immigrants as well as a Nation of laws.

I would have hoped that we would have constructed a piece of legislation that garnered the very essence of the instructions of the 9/11 Commission; that we would have taken this time to move from the Ds and Fs of which this Nation was graded some 10 days by the 9/11 Commission and actually incurred the appreciation of the Nation by doing real border security, real border enforcement and real immigration reform.