Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)

NAYS—149

Akin
Altmire
Bachmann
Bachus
Baird
Barrett (SC)
Barrow
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cantor
Capito
Conaway
Crenshaw
Cubin
Culberson
Davis, David
Deal (GA)
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
English (PA)
Everett
Fallin
Flake
Forbes
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gingrey
Goode
Hastert
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Larsen (WA)
Latham
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Manzullo
Marchant
Matheson
McCarthy (CA)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Musgrave
Neugebauer
Nunes
Pearce
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shays
Shuster
Smith (NE)
Smith (TX)
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Upton
Walberg
Walsh (NY)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Wu
Young (FL)

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—2

Gohmert
Tancredo

NOT VOTING—17

Baldwin
Brady (PA)
Cannon
Castor
Chandler
Davis, Jo Ann
Dicks
Feeney
Gilchrest
Graves
Kanjorski
Kucinich
Meehan
Pence
Peterson (PA)
Sessions
Woolsey

□ 1447

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). Members are advised that 2 minutes remain in this vote.

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 214. An act to amend chapter 35 of title 28, United States Code, to preserve the independence of United States attorneys.

PREFERENTIAL TARIFF TREATMENT REGARDING HAITI—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 110–20)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, without objection, referred to the Committee on Ways and Means and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

The Haitian Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement Act of 2006 (Division D, Title V of Public Law 109–432), amends the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (Title II of the Trade and Development Act of 2000, Public Law 106–200) (CBERA), to make certain products from Haiti eligible for preferential tariff treatment. In accordance with section 213A of CBERA, as amended, I have determined that Haiti meets the eligibility requirements under section 213A(d)(1) of CBERA, as amended, and that Haiti is meeting the conditions regarding enforcement of circumvention under section 213A(e)(1) of CBERA, as amended.

GEORGE W. BUSH.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *March 19, 2007*.

SUPPLEMENTARY AGREEMENT ON SOCIAL SECURITY BETWEEN UNITED STATES AND SWEDEN—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 110–21)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on Ways and Means and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to section 233(e)(1) of the Social Security Act, as amended by the Social Security Amendments of 1977 (42 U.S.C. 433(d)(1)), I transmit herewith the Supplementary Agreement on Social Security between the United States of America and the Kingdom of Sweden. The Supplementary Agreement was signed in Stockholm on June 22, 2004, and is intended to modify certain provisions of the original United States-Sweden Agreement, which was signed May 27, 1985, and that entered into force January 1, 1987.

The United States-Sweden Agreement, as revised by the Supplementary Agreement, remains similar in objective to the social security agreements that are also in force with Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Korea, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Such bilateral agreements provide for limited coordination between the United States and foreign social security systems to eliminate dual social security coverage and taxation, and to help prevent the loss of benefits that can occur when workers divide their careers between two countries. The United States-Sweden Agreement, as revised by the Supplementary Agreement, contains all provisions mandated by section 233 and other provisions that I deem appropriate to carry out the purposes of section 233, pursuant to section 233(c)(4).

I also transmit for the information of the Congress a report prepared by the Social Security Administration explaining the key points of the Supplementary Agreement with a paragraph-by-paragraph explanation of the provisions of the Supplementary Agreement. Annexed to this report is the report required by section 233(e)(1) of the Social Security Act on the effect of the Supplementary Agreement on income and expenditures of the U.S. Social Security program and the number of individuals affected by the Supplementary Agreement and a composite text of the United States-Sweden Agreement showing the changes that will be made as a result of the Supplementary Agreement. The Department of State and the Social Security Administration have recommended the Supplementary Agreement and related documents to me.

I commend to the Congress the Supplementary Agreement to the United States-Sweden Social Security Agreement and related documents.

GEROGE W. BUSH.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *March 20, 2007*.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 1227 and include therein extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

GULF COAST HURRICANE HOUSING RECOVERY ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 254 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 1227.

□ 1450

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 1227) to assist in the provision of affordable housing to low-income families affected by Hurricane Katrina, with Mr. BAIRD in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, I begin by yielding myself 1 minute, and then yield to the main author of this bill, the gentlewoman from California.

This is a bill which comes to this House about 18 months late. It is in response to the problems of the hurricane in the gulf. It is the result of very diligent work.

One week after the committee was organized, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS), who is the Chair of the Housing Subcommittee, and I began to work on this. We had a very long all-day hearing in Washington.

During the February break, the gentlewoman from California took her subcommittee to Louisiana and Mississippi and had very extensive hearings. As a result of these very extensive hearings and consultations, we have brought forward a bill of which she is the primary author, which we believe does as much as can be done to respond to the needs of the people in that area that have sadly been, in some ways, neglected since the hurricane.

I am very pleased to be able to yield to the gentlewoman from California, who is the moving spirit behind this bill, as much time as she consumes as we describe our very belated, but still very necessary efforts to respond to these human needs.

Ms. WATERS. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Chairman, first, let me thank the Chair of the Financial Services Committee, Mr. BARNEY FRANK, for all of the time and attention he has placed on making this our number one priority, dealing with the aftermath of Katrina. He said to me and to all of the Members of my subcommittee, ''Move as quickly as you possibly can. Get the hearings going. Let's get a bill to the floor.'' And because of his interest and because of his support, we are here today on the floor indeed addressing many of those issues that should have been addressed a long time ago, and I thank Mr. FRANK so very much for that.

It has been exactly 2 weeks since the Committee on Financial Services considered H.R. 1227, the Gulf Coast Hurricane Housing Recovery Act of 2007. By a vote of 50–16, the committee passed the bill. I want to thank again Chairman FRANK for supporting the bill through markup. I want to thank the members of our committee from both sides of the aisle who voted for this bill.

There are also many Members of Congress who have expressed major concerns about the rebuilding process in the gulf region post-Katrina and support this bill.

This bill addresses many of the obstacles to the rebuilding process in the gulf region. Prior to consideration of this bill, the Committee on Financial Services held hearings on post-Katrina housing issues, followed by 2 days of subcommittee field hearings in New Orleans, Louisiana, and Gulfport, Mississippi.

The bill before you today represents consensus on one major issue; that is, for the rebuilding process in the gulf region to ever begin, we need to address the affordable housing crisis in the gulf region by returning people to their homes. Whether it is a home in need of major repair, a public housing unit damaged by the storm, or a home totally destroyed, every person who desires to live in the gulf region must be given an opportunity to rebuild and to return home.

We learned through hours of testimony that the reasons for failure in the gulf region related to the rebuilding process were often bureaucratic, administrative, as well as a consequence of inadequate poststorm planning by the Federal Government.

The hurricanes hit the gulf region in August of 2005, leaving behind unparalleled devastation. Many have acknowledged their frustration with the speed and pace of the recovery. Others realize that the efforts of Congress to provide $110 billion to the gulf region have not necessarily resulted in money into the right people's hands, and I could not agree more.

However, this bill does not place blame on anyone, but rather recognizes the need to bring efficiency to the process, whether through administration of the Road Home program or the Federal Public Housing program, so that persons in need are assisted with the financial resources that we approved for them months ago.

I had one goal when I introduced this bill, and that was to see the gulf region rebuilt, while addressing the affordable housing crisis in the region. The hurricanes destroyed nearly 300,000 units of housing in the gulf region, affordable rental units, homes of low- and moderate-income families, and public housing. The hurricanes did not discriminate when it came to destroying the housing stock in the gulf region. No income group was spared. Whether the family lived in public housing, high-priced homes, or affordable rental housing in the gulf region, they were all affected alike. Many of the residents of the major affected areas like New Orleans and elsewhere have not recovered from the storms, and thousands are still displaced and living in other parts of the country months after the storms rather than their formal communities. While all of these persons may not choose to return or even wish to return, we must provide those who do with an opportunity to return.

H.R. 1227 is about rebuilding communities to allow people to return to the gulf region. We should not have to rebuild communities one at a time in the gulf, and in some cases that is what it will take. What would be worse is not rebuilding any of the communities in the gulf region, and that is the path that we are currently on. Housing is the key to everything in the gulf region. No housing means zero communities. No communities will mean that rebuilding is impossible in the gulf region.

This bill will address a number of issues. The build resolves the HUD–FEMA dispute by allowing the Hazard Mitigation Fund to be combined with the Community Development Block Grant funds. In addition, the bill requires monthly reports by the State of Louisiana on number of households assisted through the programs funded with CDBG funds for the Road Home program.

By eliminating the prohibition against the match requirement, CDBG supplemental funds can be used in conjunction with other Federal programs, including those administered by FEMA. In addition, the bill also provides for reimbursements related to an entitlement community's use of the Community Development Block Grant funds to provide rental assistance to displaced residents.

Public housing because of the hurricanes. Many public housing residents are displaced with no reasonable housing option. Living in trailers and doubling up do not qualify as reasonable housing options. This bill would provide a means to return for the greater of 3,000 or those who respond to the survey who are former New Orleans public housing residents. It also establishes the one-for-one replacement principle by requiring a plan to be approved by HUD and the residents prior to any wholesale demolition or redevelopment efforts of public housing units.

Under the bill, HUD is required to complete a survey of displaced public housing residents to determine whether they want to return to public housing in New Orleans. In addition, the bill requires HUD to report on any proposed conversion of public housing units located in areas affected by the hurricane, as well as comply with the bill's other requirements related to public housing.

The bill addresses disaster vouchers and project-based rental assistance. It extends disaster vouchers for 3 months until January 2008. Project-based vouchers would be protected where a project was destroyed or is in need of substantial rehabilitation. The bill clarifies the voucher allocation formula by requiring HUD to make appropriate adjustments consistent with the funding year 2007 continuing resolution. In addition, the bill requires a number of proactive measures related to vouchers that will ensure that no one is left without access to housing as a result of hurricanes.

□ 1500

Further, title IV of the bill would provide for the reimbursement of landlords who suffered damages related to

commitments made by FEMA in conjunction with providing rental units to displaced residents. Without their commitment to house displaced families, what can best be described as a tragedy would have become a 21st-century horror story.

I am pleased that the Members of the House are in the position to speed up the recovery and rebuilding process in the gulf region by supporting this bill. This bill is a small investment to make sure that the $110 billion we have spent thus far is not squandered. Unfortunately, renters and homeowners alike have suffered in the gulf region for too many months. I believe this bill will bring much needed relief to those persons who have suffered the most.

Again, I would like to thank Barney Frank, our chairman, for the tremendous work that he has done. I would like to thank all of the members of our subcommittee and of the entire committee, and I want to thank Mrs. BIGGERT, the ranking member on the opposite side of the aisle, for the cooperation. She went to New Orleans. She sat in those hearings, and she visited those public housing projects, and she has as much knowledge about this as anyone.

So I am thankful that we are at this point today, and I would ask for an ''aye'' vote on this legislation.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, let me begin by thanking Chairman FRANK for bringing this bill to the House floor today and for presiding over a constructive debate when the Financial Services Committee considered the legislation earlier this month.

I also want to thank Ranking Member BACHUS for his leadership on this issue and of course Chairman WATERS for all the work that she has done in the Subcommittee on Housing on this.

Let me just kind of return to where we started with the hurricane on August 29, 2005. Hurricane Katrina hits New Orleans. September 2, 2005, President Bush signs into law a $10.5 billion supplemental appropriations measure for the affected areas. It was passed by voice vote in the House. September 9, 2005, President Bush signs into law a second installment, this time for $51.8 billion, again passed the House. March 16, 2006, the House passes the third installment for the supplemental. May 30, 2006, HUD approves Governor of Louisiana Blanco's Road Home Program, and the Governor needed congressional approval for the $4.2 billion. Fifteen days later, the House agrees to the conference report of voting approval. June 15, 2006, President Bush signs into law a third installment for the amount of $19.3 billion. June 16, 2006, the Road Home Program is operational in Louisiana. March 5, 2007, the Road Home enters its ninth month of operation. 112,672 Road Home applications. How many have closed? 2,790 grants.

So we have entered a new era where it was very important for us to go down and see what was happening and to make sure that we could effectively have something happen there.

The hurricanes that struck the gulf coast in August of 2005 affected over 1 million Americans, destroying or damaging some 265,000 homes and apartments in Louisiana and Mississippi alone. Since the disaster, the Federal Government has committed more than $110 billion to help the gulf coast, including $16.7 billion for the CDBG program, which provides flexibility for housing and economically rebuilding the programs. Unfortunately, getting the money out the door is taking more time than it should. With respect to the CDBG funding, for example, only $1.2 billion of the $16.7 billion promised has been delivered.

With respect to the affordable housing stock, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita left 112,000 fewer rental units in the five-State gulf coast region than existed before the storms. As the region recovers, and as residents seek to return, there has been a spike in demand for nondamaged rental units from construction workers, displaced lower-income renters, and higher-income homeowners who are temporarily renting units in the area while their houses are repaired.

Since the disaster first struck, the Financial Services Committee has certainly played an active role passing much needed legislation last Congress that relieved regulatory burdens and shored up the government's flood insurance program. During this Congress, the full committee and the Housing Subcommittee, on which I serve, have held multiple hearings on the reconstruction and recovery area in the gulf. Indeed, over the President's Day recess, as Chairwoman WATERS mentioned, my colleague from Texas, Mr. NEUGEBAUER, and I participated in field hearings held by Chairman WATERS in New Orleans and Mississippi. There we heard from residents trying to rebuild their lives and communities in the face of considerable obstacles and often maddening bureaucratic delays.

The magnitude of the challenge facing the gulf coast residents requires us to rise above partisanship and political finger-pointing and develop sustainable solutions to the very serious problems that persist in New Orleans and other parts of the region.

While the committee Republicans share the majority's goal of providing displaced families with stability and ensuring there is access to safe, affordable housing, a number of provisions in H.R. 1227 are troubling. Accordingly, the Republicans will offer several amendments made in order by the Rules Committee that will seek to assist those in need while, at the same time, being mindful of the need for fiscal responsibility and for prioritizing among competing demands for tax dollars.

It is important that we act in a deliberative and thoughtful manner on this important piece of legislation. Rather than seeking to simply reconstitute a public housing system that was clearly broken long before Katrina made land fall, we owe it to the residents of the gulf coast to build something better. Our focus should be on helping those families who lived in the gulf before the hurricanes and wish to return home to rebuild their lives and communities.

Hurricane Katrina not only left physical devastation in its wake; it left behind a reservoir of anger, strong emotions and painful experiences. Our challenge is to channel these experiences and emotions into an appropriate response. Thousands of affected Americans depend on us not to get angry, but to do it right. So do the families who in the future may themselves experience a Katrina-like tragedy.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, first for 1 minute I would like to recognize myself to acknowledge the spirit in which this happened. I think this bill is a very good blend of partisanship and bipartisanship, and they are equally important. Partisanship, there has never been a democracy in the history of the world where you did not have political parties. People who are on trying to govern themselves cannot do that as a kind of a random mass. And there are general philosophical differences. The key is not to allow those legitimate differences of ideology and partisanship to poison the ability to work together. I think this bill shows that.

And I am very grateful to the gentlewoman from Illinois, the gentleman from Texas, the gentleman from Alabama. We worked together on this. There were some strong disagreements. We had a number of rollcall votes. Some of them were close; some of them weren't. We have managed to reproduce through the rule most of those, not all I acknowledge, but most of those substantive disagreements about this bill, they are in here in the rule to the extent that people wanted to redebate them. And that is important.

But I acknowledge the fact that while we had some differences, that did not prevent us from coming together on some commonality. There was never in this bill any effort to delay or divert. We managed to talk seriously. And, yes, there are differences between the parties. There is on our side, I believe, a greater willingness to provide some funding for some of these things. Those will be legitimately debated.

Mr. Chairman, let me now yield to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), who is the chairman of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, who has been very helpful, because the lives of FEMA and HUD are deeply intertwined, and trying to legislate here requires treading this. And the gentleman from Minnesota is an example to others not to allow turf consciousness and jurisdictional hypersensitivity to get in the way of good

public policy. So I thank the gentleman. I yield him such time as he will consume.

Mr. OBERSTAR. I thank the gentleman for yielding time rather than turf. And the gentleman is quite right. I greatly appreciate the participation that we had, the partnership between our two committees. And I want to compliment the gentleman from Massachusetts and the Chair of the subcommittee, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS), and the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT), and the Republican members on our committee who have all worked together to see to it that this critical piece of legislation dealing with addressing the housing needs still outstanding, 18 months after Katrina and Rita devastated the gulf coast, to see that they can be carried through, that we can deliver the needs of the people in the entire gulf coast area.

We have worked out some concerns that we had on our side through the jurisdiction our committee has over FEMA to address the problems of people to ensure that we provide new assistance and speed up the help from the existing programs, make sure that that money flows more vigorously to the people and readily.

I have been engaged with FEMA since the mid-1980s when the then-Reagan administration proposed to revise funding under, what we now call FEMA was then Civil Defense, as to reduce to zero the Federal support for almost every disaster except a very few, and then there would be only 25 percent Federal support.

With the help of a Member of Congress from Pennsylvania, a Republican, and the ranking Republican on my Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight, we exposed this failing to the public. We rallied support, created the framework which is today FEMA, and that Member of Congress from Pennsylvania then introduced a bill we developed in committee. We got it enacted. And many years later, he was selected by President Bush to be the first Secretary of Homeland Security, Tom Ridge. So bipartisanship on this issue goes back very deeply to the very beginning of this issue.

And one of the things I wanted to talk about that was initiated through our committee and with the Clinton administration was the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, critical funds that help get homes and properties out of storms' way, saving properties, saving lives. Over $7 billion has been invested under FEMA in the mitigation program to over 1,000 federally declared disasters.

An independent study of the Institute for Business and Home Safety found: ''Mitigation produces significant net benefits to society as a whole, to individuals, States and communities in reduced future losses and savings to the Federal Treasury in future reduced tax revenues and hazard-related expenditures. For every dollar spent on mitigation,'' the study found, ''the society saves an average of $7.''

After the 1993 Mississippi River floods, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds removed homes, removed entire communities from the flood zone. After tornadoes, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds created tornado-safe rooms in what is known as ''Tornado Alley.'' We have used those funds to great benefit.

Unfortunately, the Bush administration, early on, proposed to terminate hazard mitigation funds. We restore that authority in this and previous legislation and will do so in subsequent legislation. But this is not the last bill in the House to deal with the devastation caused by Katrina, and I hope by the end of next week we will bring the Water Resources Development Act to the House floor from our committee, some nearly $14 billion in flood control, navigation, environmental restoration projects. Of long standing, over 6 years we have waited in our committee to bring this bill to the floor. We passed it three times. It has never gotten through the Senate; never gotten to conference over it and, again, a bipartisan bill. But it will begin reconstruction of the coastal Louisiana flood plain and of the Mississippi area flood plain. It will authorize construction of the Morganza Flood Control Project in central Louisiana to protect people from flood damage and from future hurricanes. It will close the Mississippi River gulf outlet that the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JEFFERSON) well understands caused salt water intrusion and destruction of the marsh land that was the buffering and protective entity against floods that came from Lake Borne in and overtopped St. Bernard Parish, washed homes away. We will close that off and rebuild it.

So I would cite those few things. This bill is critically important. It deals with very specific aspects. All of us have to continue working together to craft the needed protection, both by restoring wetlands and putting in place the structures of flood control and wind surge damage to the gulf area and particularly to the New Orleans area. I have been there many, many times; and I can say that it is disheartening to see how slow the progress is coming along in certain areas of that city, those that desperately need it.

This bill, and I take my hat off to the chairman of the Financial Services Committee and to the gentlewoman from California for leading the charge and making a powerful statement that we are going to address these needs, this bill will effectively do that.

□ 1515

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, at this time I would like to yield 8 minutes to my very distinguished and esteemed colleague, the ranking member of the Financial Services Committee, Mr. BACHUS of Alabama.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

Hurricane Katrina was a terrible tragedy for people all along the gulf coast, for the people of New Orleans, but it was a greater tragedy for those who already were living with a sense of hopelessness and despair in the public housing projects of New Orleans. For them the tragedy did not start with Katrina. It preexisted Katrina. In those housing projects, children actually slept in bathtubs for their own protection. Elderly citizens, 10 and 15 years ago, were hiding in closets.

But out of what was this despair in the housing projects of New Orleans, and really in many housing projects throughout the United States, we can use New Orleans and other models throughout this country to do something better than we have done. We have a moral imperative to change the standard of public housing in New Orleans, and not only in New Orleans but throughout this country. We can do better than simply warehousing families in failed large housing projects in crime-ridden communities. Our vision should be vibrant mixed-use communities with good housing, safe streets, and strong schools.

Consider these facts about what happens when you concentrate and change the face and the environment of public housing: several years ago, the New York Times reported that 70 percent of the inmates in the New York prison system came from just seven ZIP codes with large concentrations of public housing. In other words, where you are born and the environment you are born into may put you, in all likelihood, on the road to the penitentiary. When you live in a neighborhood where poverty and hopelessness prevail, it becomes a breeding ground for crime, drug use, and all that goes with it.

It was the same not only in New Orleans but it was the same sense of hopelessness, despair, and high crime in the East Lake community in downtown Atlanta. The East Lake public housing project was considered so dangerous that police refused to go on patrol there. Then a visionary named Tom Cousins, an Atlanta developer, came up with an idea: Why not replace a failed project with a 21st-century approach to housing, very similar to what we have done with HOPE VI? The answer was to create a public-private partnership emphasizing mixed use. With the help of HUD, the Atlanta housing authority and Tom Cousins and others totally transformed East Lake. They tore down the old projects. Yes, they tore down the old projects. They had to demolish some of those units.

This bill restricts our ability to tear down old units. There are 2,000 units in New Orleans that were not habitable that we have said we are going to go in and instead of replacing them with something new, something modern, something that offers hope, we are simply going to replace what existed there.

They tore down the old projects. They built new housing, and they

opened a new school. Now doctors and lawyers live next door to those whose housing is subsidized. In the old projects, there was only about a two-thirds' occupancy level. The occupancy level in New Orleans is very low because of the shoddy condition of the housing. Now 100 percent of the subsidized units are occupied, and the overall occupancy rate is 93.5 percent.

But something much greater than that, occupancy levels shouldn't be our main concern. It should be the condition of the people that are living there, their standard of living. Crime in the neighborhood has gone from the worst in Atlanta, 56 out of 56, the worst of 56 precincts, down to the 11th best precinct. Now, this is an area of mixed-use public housing which is actually one of the safest areas of Atlanta. The neighborhood has literally come back from the dead. But it wouldn't have happened if we had simply gone in like we propose to do in New Orleans and put it back exactly like it existed. In the end we are serving more low-income residents than we would if we had just replaced one on one.

But it isn't just happening in East Lake. Centennial Place in Atlanta is another success story, and the same transformation took place in Birmingham, and is taking place, with the Metropolitan Gardens development, a neighborhood that is now brightened by a new school, new housing, and a new YMCA.

It can be done. The Housing Authority of New Orleans has been dysfunctional for nearly 50 years. There is understandably a lot of anger and mistrust among the residents of New Orleans public housing after so many broken promises. But the anger, their anger and ours, should be channeled into moving forward in the direction of decent houses and safe communities.

HUD has a design for mixed-use communities similar to East Lake, Centennial, and Metropolitan Gardens. But that approach was rejected by the committee majority in favor of the one-to-one replacement of the old houses, in the same place, in the same location, in the same conditions. It is time to do better and we must.

This bill does not meet our imperative to the people of New Orleans public housing. If the concern is that some residents who want to return to New Orleans may not have a home to come back to, we can make provisions for that, but not into the old communities of high crime and hopelessness and despair. One-to-one is not the only way to bring people back, nor is it the best way or the more imaginative or innovative way. What will bring people back is a good place to live where crime and fear have been replaced by hope and opportunity.

Let me close simply by saying no matter what your party is, no matter what your political philosophy is, New Orleans can serve all of us as a model for improving our inner-city areas, those areas throughout America today, high-crime areas, widespread drug use, high unemployment. But more important than all those statistics, let us improve the standard of living for those people in those communities, not only in New Orleans but throughout this country. And our obligation should not end with this bill today. It ought to continue next week. We ought to continue to look at it until we do it right.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds.

We agree on all the things the gentleman from Alabama said we should do. Nothing in this bill stops them from doing it.

All we say is this: please don't tear down the houses that people now live in before you replace them. We are not in any way opposed to that; but if you don't think the housing the people live in now is great, and neither do I, understand that they are only there because they can't get anything better, and that is the only point of difference. We are saying do not displace them before that nice, new stuff is ready.

And as for one-for-one, we aren't saying it has to be one-for-one right onsite. If you get a one-for-one replacement that is in mixed housing, that will be fine; but just don't displace people.

Mr. Chairman, I now yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. JEFFERSON. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1227, the Gulf Coast Hurricane Housing Recovery Act of 2007. This bill is just another example of the commitment of this Congress to rebuild the city of New Orleans and the towns and cities surrounding it.

I thank Chairman FRANK and subcommittee Chair WATERS for their outstanding leadership on this legislation. I also thank my Republican colleagues who came down to New Orleans with our chairlady and who did an outstanding job for our people. And I thank them all for the urgency they attached to the housing issues in our region.

The affordable housing rental units lost in Katrina represented about 30 percent of the destroyed or severely damaged rental housing in a city that had 60 percent renters before the storm. The crisis of affordable housing in the gulf coast has prevented tens of thousands of families from returning, and that is addressed by this bill substantially. Additionally, more than 4,000 families that resided in public housing have not returned because their developments remain closed despite their having valid leases with their rent paid on time. Some have made their way back to the city only to discover their units boarded up and padlocked.

Two 60-year-old identical twins, Gloria Williams and Bobbie Jennings, came to Washington to explain what happened to them after Katrina. These women lived in adjacent apartments in the C.J. Peete public housing development for 24 years. After they were forced to evacuate for Katrina, they were relocated six times. For several months they were separated. They said it was the first time in their lives that they had ever been apart.

HUD officials said the development should be torn down, but the women said they have cleaned their units of modest storm damage and believe they are habitable again.

As Mr. FRANK has pointed out, nothing in this bill prevents mixed housing or prevents reform or redevelopment. What we are most concerned about is that people right now have a chance to return home today, tomorrow, as opposed to a building that is going to be built within the next 3 to 5 years. To do as HUD has proposed across all public housing units in New Orleans is tantamount to forced homelessness.

It has been 19 months since the people of New Orleans and surrounding parishes were forced out across 48 States through no fault of their own. It is now time for everyone who wants to come home to come home. Without passage of this bill, we are giving our implied consent to the permanent exile of residents who only wish to enjoy the same rights and privileges to a home that everyone else across the country would want to enjoy. This bill makes the road home smoother for our people and helps a great deal toward getting our people back home.

I urge passage of this bill.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, at this time I would like to yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Texas, the deputy ranking member of the Financial Services Committee and who also traveled to New Orleans and Mississippi.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, I thank Ranking Member BIGGERT of the subcommittee for yielding.

And I also want to rise and thank Chairwoman WATERS, the subcommittee chairman of Housing, for having the hearings down in New Orleans and over in Mississippi. I see a number of Members in the Chamber that went on that trip. That was a very positive trip. But I think what we learned while we were down there is we share some common feelings about the recovery. And I think that was the frustration that we shared while we were down there where we saw very little progress in one area and a lot of progress in the other. In fact, I have said to my colleagues back home that this is a tale of two recoveries: the recovery or lack of recovery in New Orleans in Louisiana and the recovery that is going on in Mississippi.

I want to associate myself with some of the words the ranking member just made on the floor awhile ago about the model that needs to take place in New Orleans when we are talking about going back and building new housing. Some of the proposals that some of the people put forward while we were in New Orleans would not meet criteria

for a new federally subsidized housing project today. We don't do that anymore. We don't create these huge pockets where we have impoverished people where we see high crime, and we now go to mixed projects that provide communities that give diversity to those.

□ 1530

New Orleans faced a great devastation from the fact that they had a catastrophic hurricane. But now they have a great opportunity to rebuild, really starting in many places with a clean piece of paper. Can this be done without some disruption? No, it cannot, because the disruption has already taken place. And there are people who do want to return to New Orleans and to Louisiana, and there are people who may not return.

But what we do owe the American people, and I appreciate the fact that Ranking Member BIGGERT laid out a very clear outline of what this Congress has done to step up to meet the needs of the people that were affected by this hurricane, and the list is long, and the money is great, what we owe the American people is to make sure that we take that money now that we have put in place for Katrina and make sure it gets spent appropriately and that it benefits the people for which it is intended.

One of the things that concerns me about this bill is that every time we stand up and get into a discussion about Katrina, we have to authorize more money. In fact, this bill authorizes $1.3 billion in new money. But money is really not the issue in Louisiana and New Orleans.

Now, I will admit and agree with the chairman, Chairman FRANK, that there are some things in this bill that clean up some administrative issues that probably need to take place. But let me tell you, the reason there is not recovery in New Orleans today is not because the United States Congress hasn't passed this bill. What they need in New Orleans and in Louisiana is probably leadership more than they need more money. But this bill does address some of that.

There are some amendments that were offered in our committee, in our markup, and I want to say this to Chairman FRANK, that we had a very good markup. He ran that meeting well and allowed a lot of amendments, and we had good debate and conversations about that, and I appreciate that. But there are amendments that are in this bill that make it more fiscally responsible and make it less micromanaging.

One of the things I get concerned about is we have got a Congress right now that wants to run the war in Iraq, and now we have a Congress that wants to run the recovery in New Orleans. What we do know is that we have to set out some parameters for that.

What the people need in New Orleans is to get started. Hopefully they will begin to do that. We saw some signs they were moving in that direction. But what I would say to my colleagues is that what we have to do is at some point in time say, you know, this is all of the money and resources that we are going to give to this cause until we see some tangible results. Unfortunately, when you look at what is going on in Louisiana right now, there are not tangible results. It would not be something that you would want to put more money into until you see some better stewardship of the dollars that have already been authorized. In fact, many of the dollars that we have already authorized have not been spent.

So what I want our colleagues to do today as they listen to this debate is make sure that we accomplish the goal of what was the original intent of H.R. 1227, and that was to fix some slight glitches in the process, but not to become more fiscally irresponsible.

In closing, I would just say there is an opportunity in New Orleans. But I will tell you, the American people that are watching this debate today, and I hear it when I go back home, they are saying, Congressman, how much more money are we going to have to put into this process until we begin to see some results?

As I was riding in with a cabdriver going to the hearing that the chairwoman had in New Orleans, I asked the cabdriver, what is going on in New Orleans? He said, nothing. I said, what is the problem? He said, we have no plan, we have no leadership.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 15 seconds to say I agree with the gentleman that we should not be spending a lot more money where it has been badly spent. Also, I did not think we were going to be talking about Iraq until later in the week.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. BACA).

(Mr. BACA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BACA. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank Chairman FRANK and Chairwoman WATERS for their hard work and dedication in helping the thousands of victims that have been left homeless by the hurricane on the gulf coast. Thank you for caring and wanting to take action.

I rise in support of the Gulf Coast Hurricane Housing Recovery Act, H.R. 1227. Eighteen months have passed since Katrina hit, yet thousands are still struggling to get back on their feet. This bill is about the thousands of people struggling to get back on their feet.

Last year, the TriCaucus Chairs, GRACE NAPOLITANO, MIKE HONDA and MEL WATT, met in Houston to cohost a townhall meeting on Katrina, where they listened to Katrina victims who had been displaced to Houston. Since then, we have learned that 99,000 families are still living in trailers, including 65,000 in Louisiana, 31,000 in Mississippi, and thousands more individuals are still living with relatives in States throughout the Nation.

Families, workers and businesses can't return to the gulf area until they have homes to return to. We need to rebuild. Their lives are being impacted, and it is affecting their ability to improve their quality of life. This is their home. This is their castle. We need to rebuild.

The administration's slow response has been a major factor in the pace of recovery. The President didn't even mention Katrina in his 2007 State of the Union Address. Billions of dollars are going to rebuild Iraq, while American families are waiting for assistance right here at home in America. Shame.

Enough is enough. We can't afford to leave these families behind. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1227.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, I yield 5 minutes to my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BAKER), who has probably seen much more of the devastation than we can ever imagine.

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlelady for her courtesy.

I rise today to make observation that when a hurricane makes landfall, most people do not consider it a Republican or a Democratic event; that in the aftermath, when you have been devastated from life and property and someone comes to help, you don't ask, are you from local government, State government or Federal Government, and, by the way, are you a Republican or a Democrat?

The only thing I observed that hurricanes and government have in common at this point as a Louisianian is that either one you touch, you are going to come away confused, disoriented and possibly hopeless.

We can do better. I should be quick to add, however, lest these comments be misinterpreted, that it was President Bush's administration who came to this Congress and asked for the $100 billion of taxpayer money to begin the long, slow process of recovery. I also want to quickly add that it was Chairman FRANK who discussed with me the administrative problems of the resolution and incorporated into the bill now before us important expediting processes which will make a measurable and financial difference to the people of Louisiana.

I want to express my appreciation to Chairwoman WATERS and Ranking Member BIGGERT for their continued effort to understand and respond.

Not to dismiss that there are problems. In fact, a provision I was trying to include in the bill, which was made reference to during the debate on the rule, caused the CBO to express concern that we had a scoring problem. To make sure I say this the way I intend it, I learned that the CBO scoring process is mystical, algorithmic, nonsensical, opaque process intended to obstinately delegate common sense to irrelevance.

Short-circuiting all of that, let me say I appreciate Chairman FRANK's

staff working diligently and the Rules Committee allowing that provision to be made in order and to be included in this legislation.

That problem is not the only one for taxpayers. Let me explain to you that when you send us a dollar, we don't get a dollar. At best, we get 80 cents, because FEMA has been keeping at least 20 percent of all the money intended to help people recover for their operational expenses. The American public needs to know that, that we are not wasting $100 billion. Certainly we can be more efficient in rolling out a response to a devastation that we have seen never before in this country, 90,000 square miles. I would say where we are today is not a hopeless mess, but indeed it is a mess.

My hope is that the small pilot program contained in this legislation, which will enable the collection of disparate tracts of property to be cleaned off and sold back into the private market, can be a way to kick-start a free-market recovery that to date has been impossible with government interference and obstinate regulation. There is a faster, better way, a more efficient way, to combat this scale of devastation and human suffering.

Maximizing taxpayer expenditures while minimizing benefits to those in need doesn't seem possible to the extent that we have seen in the current circumstance. If there is to be any long-term benefit to the resolution of this matter for all the affected taxpayers around this country, it is to construct a response mechanism that when the next devastating event occurs, we will be able to deploy resources, get people the help they need in an efficient manner, and get government the heck out of the way and let free markets function.

The bill before us today incorporates provisions that I believe will help get us closer to that goal. Are we there yet? Of course not.

Webster charges this House of Representatives with a very clear mission: Let us develop the resources of this land, call forth her powers, build up her institutions, promote all her great interests, and see whether we also in this, our day and generation, may perform something to be worthy of remembering.

Webster got it. We need to leave this place in a better condition than when we found it. We can do better than this. And before the next disaster strikes, we must.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 15 seconds to thank the gentleman for his work on this and to say that one of the things the gentleman talked about last year when I worked with him and we decided whoever would be in the majority, we need to straighten out going forward the FEMA–HUD relationship with regard to housing. Part of the problem is, in fairness to FEMA, they should not still be in the housing business. That was not their expertise.

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I yield to the gentleman from Louisiana.

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Chairman, I would just observe the gentleman is absolutely correct. There is FEMA-ese and HUD-ese and they don't apparently have a translator.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, we will work that out.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY).

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his important leadership on this bill.

I rise in strong support of the Gulf Coast Hurricane Housing Recovery Act. This bill was marked up earlier this month in the Financial Services Committee and was passed by a strong bipartisan vote.

I not only thank the chairman and Ranking Member BACHUS, but Chairwoman WATERS and Ranking Member BIGGERT. Chairwoman WATERS led many hearings and meetings and conferences on this, going to New Orleans and Mississippi, meeting with the families, with the authorities, and working with really great devotion and determination to move this bill to the floor to help the people in the gulf region.

This bill is a victory for those people who have suffered so greatly not only through Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, but an awe-inspiring amount of bureaucratic red tape, trying to get the help and the assistance that they need.

This bill will finally provide comprehensive housing relief for the hurricane-impacted areas of the gulf coast, and it will expedite and move forward and cut through the red tape so that the money and the services get to the people they were intended for.

It provides increased flexibility and oversight, while preserving Federal housing assistance and providing assistance to landowners and communities who helped evacuees. It provides flexibility by freeing up $1.2 billion in funds for Louisiana's Road Home program for which FEMA is currently withholding use by transferring the funds to the Community Development Block Grant account, and it eliminates an unnecessary restriction imposed by the prior Congress against CDBG funds being used to meet matching requirements under other Federal programs.

It increases oversight by requiring the Louisiana Recovery Authority, the entity that administers the Road Home program, to report on their progress every 30 days on exactly what they are doing to help the people.

□ 1545

It preserves Federal housing assistance by including a number of provisions to rebuild the stock of affordable housing and to ensure that the administration will not shrink the level of housing assistance that supports that housing stock.

It provides assistance to communities that assisted evacuees by authorizing reimbursement for communities that used their own CDBG funds to provide rental assistance to evacuees after the storms hit, and it also provides such reimbursement to landowners who assisted the people.

This is a good bill. It cuts through the red tape. It provides assistance to the people, and I congratulate all who worked on it, particularly the Chair of the subcommittee, Ms. WATERS.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Chairman, let me just say that going down there was quite an experience and something I never would have dreamed had happened. To see that firsthand, to go into the public housing and to see the interiors that had been sitting there for over 18 months that had been underwater for several days, particularly in New Orleans. In Mississippi, it was just a storm surge so the wall of water went in and then it went out, taking with it the homes.

But in New Orleans where the water sat, and to see the debris that was left inside, the clothes, the furniture, the food and cupboards and the mold will take an enormous amount of fixing.

When I was talking about it to someone, they asked, Are the cars still in the trees? I said, No, the cars have been removed from the trees, but the buildings are still standing just as they were untouched. So it is a big job.

As Ranking Member BACHUS said about finding mixed-use housing, to move public housing into the 21st century I think should be all of our goals, to be able to provide a place where those who need subsidized housing can live in what would be a larger unit. The units that we saw were tiny. Water heaters were in the kitchen next to the stove with all of the wires where little kids would be playing. So to have larger units for a family, to have open spaces, and to have the services.

Right now they are in a quandary because people want to come back, but there is no housing. People want workers in their community, and there is no place for the workers to live. So until we can break this cycle, and that is what takes leadership from those that are in the community, to break that cycle so there is housing, there are workers, and there are services.

At least seven hospitals were destroyed in New Orleans. They don't have the medical services or the groceries stores. So even if someone comes back, and they have restored some of the housing and some of the units, they may remain empty because they are living in a place that is almost empty and there are no services. You can't just go to the grocery store. We have to jump-start this, and I think this bill goes well on its way to get over the bureaucracy and to have the leadership, the grass-roots leadership, begin to do that.

In Mississippi we saw a different situation where the storm came in and out.

All you see are slabs and concrete stairs from those slabs going to nowhere. About the only thing remaining were oak trees, beautiful, beautiful oak trees that did survive. All of the other foliage is gone.

There they have been able to rebuild. A lot has been done. Maybe it is because houses didn't sit in the water. The water came and went, and they were able to remove the debris. But there I think we had some of the leadership that is needed on the local level.

From the hearings, it gave us hope. After 18 months, they have the money. Congress has done their job and we will be able to get them back on a track and not set precedents that will be unwieldy if there are other such disasters.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES).

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the chairman of the full committee, the Chair of the housing subcommittee, as well as the ranking members.

I used to serve on both of these committees when I was on Financial Services, and my heart longs to address many of the same issues. From the Ways and Means Committee, I hope to try to do some of that.

I have traveled to the Hurricane Katrina area on three occasions. The first time I went, I went to visit some of the folks that were put out of their homes and they were staying in arenas across Houston and across Baton Rouge and across New Orleans.

The second time I went, I went with Leader PELOSI when a group of us had an opportunity to tour the areas about 9 months later. I sat down and talked with officials.

The third time I was there when the people of New Orleans were dying to have an opportunity to vote for the mayoral candidate of their choice.

Louisiana is important to me because a lot of my father's and mother's friends lived in Louisiana when they grew up in Alabama. But the thing I think we need to remember about Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama, that is America. That is the United States of America, and the people of those communities deserve to be treated royally. They deserve to have the services and housing that they need. I think that this piece of legislation goes towards that effort.

More importantly, I have run into people from Louisiana who say, Congresswoman TUBBS JONES, I want to help rebuild New Orleans, but somehow I have to be gone. I want to come back and live, and people are coming from all over the world working in New Orleans rebuilding my hometown. I want to be there to have the opportunity to do that.

I believe this legislation gives us an opportunity to do that as well.

I have introduced a piece of legislation, H.R. 1043, which is called the Community Restoration and Revitalization Act of 2007. What that legislation does is allows us to use the historic preservation tax credit in conjunction with low-income housing tax credit so that when we rebuild the historic areas of New Orleans, we won't just rebuild for the people who are coming in with money who want to live in those areas, the gentrified areas; but there will be dollars to provide for people who stayed in the community and want to be there for a while and need to be able to afford to live in those areas.

This is an important day for us. Just as we rebuilt New York after 9/11 and everybody bought into the process, and I don't make a comparison between 9/11 and a hurricane, but what I will say to you is that the people of this area are Americans just like the rest of us, and they need a place to live, and they need to be able to bring their children back and restore that culture that is so rich a part of the United States of America.

I stand here today encouraging, urging, pleading with my colleagues to not let this opportunity pass. Don't let it be said that on March 20, 2007, when your children and grandchildren asked where were you and what did you do for the people of New Orleans, Mississippi and Alabama, and you say, I did nothing.

I am glad to stand here in support of the legislation. I celebrate my colleagues and thank you for an opportunity to be heard.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise to express my support for H.R. 1227, the Gulf Coast Hurricane Housing Recovery Act and commend my colleague Congresswoman Waters and the Financial Services Committee for bringing this very important legislation to the House floor today.

The devastation of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma has required an unprecedented response from the Federal, state and local governments, as well as the private sector. While, there has been progress, there is still widespread dissatisfaction in the government's response to providing emergency and long-term recovery, especially housing. There are still tens of thousands of families that cannot return to their homes or any home because there is still a major crisis in the public housing sector. As their needs were not met in the immediate wake of the storm, many of the former residents of public housing units in the Gulf Coast have continued to find their needs severely neglected over the past 19 months.

The Gulf Coast Recovery Act addresses the concerns that were expressed by disaster victims at hearings held in the affected areas. This bill includes provisions that will address the crisis of affordable housing in the Gulf Coast, including freeing up $1.175 billion appropriated for the Louisiana Road Home program. Another important provision is the extension of the September deadline that would cutoff 12,000 families currently receiving Disaster Voucher Program assistance. This also helps the thousands of citizens who generously opened their homes to those in need, when our own government did not step up to the plate to assist.

Relief, recovery and reconstruction efforts for Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma are ongoing—and will continue until the Gulf Coast is completely up and running again and all displaced victims are once again living in a permanent home. H.R. 1227 helps us to achieve this goal. I urge passage of the Gulf Coast Hurricane Housing Recovery Act.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1227, the Gulf Coast Hurricane Housing Recovery Act of 2007. Among other things, this legislation includes provisions designed to speed up the repair and rebuilding of homes and affordable rental housing in areas affected by Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma; ensures continued rental assistance for both families that have moved back to their home areas and for families displaced by such hurricanes, and provides reimbursements to communities and landlords that were generous in providing assistance to hurricane evacuees in the aftermath of the storms.

Mr. Chairman, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita hit landfall in 2005. In the immediate aftermath of the storms, Congress provided substantial sums through the Federal Emergency Management Administration, FEMA, to address emergency needs arising from the devastation that the storms created, and to provide a housing safety net for families who lost their homes or were otherwise displaced. Later in 2005 and in the summer of 2006, Congress approved two emergency spending bills providing more than $16 billion in CDBG funds for affected states, to provide assistance for home repairs and reconstruction and for repair and rebuilding of a depleted stock of affordable rental housing. Congress also appropriated $390 million for the Disaster Voucher Program, which provides voucher assistance to formerly HUD-assisted families that have been displaced by these hurricanes.

However, some 18 months after these storms, the pace of recovery of housing repair and reconstruction is not as robust in many areas as many had hoped. The pace of home repair, particularly in areas within Louisiana, has been slow. The repair or rebuilding of many damaged federally subsidized public and assisted housing units, affordable to lower income families, has still not taken place. And, tens of thousands of federally assisted evacuees from these hurricanes face impending deadlines later this year for continued eligibility for rental assistance.

The Financial Services Committee has held a number of hearings over the past year and a half, including two in September 2005, two in December 2005, two in January 2006, one in February 2006, and three in February 2007 to explore the pace of the housing recovery effort in the Gulf Coast. The hearings included representatives of Federal agencies, State and local government officials, housing developers, nonprofit organizations, and representatives of low income housing. Witnesses testified as to the current state of the housing recovery in various communities in the Gulf Coast and offered legislative suggestions for addressing housing problems in those areas. The bill ultimately reported out of the Financial Services Committees relies extensively on the hearing record and these suggestions.

FLEXIBILITY

H.R. 1227 includes a number of provisions designed to improve flexibility with respect to previously appropriated funds for hurricane recovery efforts on the Gulf Coast. The bill would free up for use $1.175 billion in funds

previously made available for use to the State of Louisiana under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, but which has been held up by FEMA. Louisiana has proposed combining these funds with CDBG funds under its Road Home program for grants to homeowners, but FEMA will not approve use of the funds because of Road Home provisions that provide incentives for homeowners to commit to returning to the state to live. Under the program, homeowners would receive a 40 percent reduction in any Road Home grant money if they leave the state. However, this provision excepts homeowners over the age of 65. The bill would transfer such funds to CDBG, to expedite the availability of such funds.

The bill eliminates an unduly restrictive ''duplication of benefits'' provision that has resulted in homeowners in Louisiana receiving less than the funds they need to rebuild under the Road Home Program, while instating a prohibition against any person receiving a ''windfall gain'' from assistance under that program.

The bill eliminates a provision from a previous CDBG appropriations bill that prohibits CDBG funds from being used as a match for other Federal programs, a change that could help cash strapped communities without a tax base that are unable to meet these other match requirements.

The bill provides that $15 million in CDBG funds made available to the State of Louisiana shall be transferred to the New Orleans Redevelopment Agency, for a pilot program to leverage private capital to assemble, redevelop and resell parcels of land in New Orleans.

Finally, the bill expedites the handling of loss claims for lenders in the case of FHA insured 1- to 4-unit properties where there are problems with the conveyance of title.

PRESERVATION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

H.R. 1227 includes a number of provisions designed to preserve the supply of rental housing that is affordable for low income families. The bill requires HUD to give timely approval of all feasible requests to restore project-based rental assistance or transfer such assistance to another site, in the case of damaged or destroyed federally assisted housing developments. The bill authorizes 4,500 new housing vouchers for the purpose of project based assistance for supportive housing units for seniors, disabled persons, and the homeless. The bill requires HUD to provide replacement vouchers for every public housing and assisted housing unit that is not brought back on line.

Similarly, with respect to public housing, the bill provides resident protections and preserves the availability of public housing units in hurricane affected areas by preventing the transfer of such units without preserving long term affordability requirements. It also conditions demolition of public housing units on providing alternative housing units for residents of the units being demolished and on replacing such units either with other public housing or with comparable units providing comparable affordability for low income residents.

Specifically, with respect to the Housing Authority of New Orleans, the bill also requires the Authority to survey pre-Katrina residents to identify which residents want to return and when, and to provide public housing or comparable units to those residents that want to return, but in any case no less than 3,000 units by August 1st. Funding is also authorized for repair, rehabilitation, and development of HANO public housing units.

The bill also authorizes $5 million in each of the next two years for Fair Housing activities, to ensure that housing activities in areas affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita are carried out in a manner that furthers fair housing.

RENTAL HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Faced with a looming September deadline for the cutoff of some 12,000 families currently receiving Disaster Voucher Program (DVP) assistance, H.R. 1227 extends this deadline through at least the end of the year, and authorizes replacement vouchers to affected families when the program terminates, which will continue as long as the family is eligible for voucher assistance.

These vouchers are attached to each individual and family and will ''disappear'' when the individual or family is no longer eligible for the assistance. The bill also provides a clarification that HUD should make adjustments in the voucher formula funding allocation changes made in the Continuing Resolution, so that Gulf Coast housing agencies will not be adversely impacted by the hurricanes.

The Continuing Resolution provided such authority for HUD to make such adjustments, and this bill requires the adjustments be made. Finally, the bill requires HUD to make a good faith effort to identify families that are eligible for Disaster Voucher Assistance but are not receiving such assistance, and make such assistance available.

OVERSIGHT

H.R. 1227 includes a number of provisions to ensure that Federal funds are used efficiently, effectively, and legally. The bill requires the State of Louisiana to submit monthly reports on the progress of the Road Home program in making funds available to homeowners. The bill requires the General Accountability Office (GAO) to complete quarterly reports identifying any waste, fraud, and abuse in connection with the program. And, the bill requires a GAO study to examine methods of improving the distribution of Federal housing funds to assist states with hurricane recovery efforts.

Finally, the bill requires that any funds used under Title II with respect to public housing construction or repair must have verification that all workers have an immigration status that allows them to be legally employed.

REIMBURSEMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LANDLORDS THAT ASSISTED EVACUEES

A number of communities and private sector landlords throughout the country played a critical role in providing housing assistance to evacuees in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. This assistance was critical at a time when housing was in short supply and hundreds of thousands of families were displaced. It is important to encourage such actions in future disasters.

Therefore, H.R. 1227 authorizes funding for reimbursement of localities that used their own CDBG funds to provide rental housing assistance to such evacuees. The bill also authorizes reimbursement to landlords who participated in the FEMA Section 403 program under which local communities co-signed private lease agreements—but who suffered financial losses arising from FEMA subsequently breaking their agreement to provide reimbursements under this program.

For all these reasons, I am proud to rise in strong support of H.R. 1227 and I urge all members to vote in favor of this important and much needed legislation.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 1227, the ''Gulf Coast Hurricane Housing Recovery Act of 2007.'' This legislation institutes long overdue reforms in our response to the devastation that hurricanes have inflicted on the Gulf Coast region.

I have been an outspoken critic of the way this Administration has mismanaged Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma, and their resulting aftermath.

Anyone who has traveled to the Ninth Ward in New Orleans, as I have, can tell you about overwhelming devastation in that community. Entire city blocks were flattened, with their rooftops smashed and scattered on the ground.

The lives of millions were similarly fractured, when governmental systems that were already weak broke down under the pressure from the storm.

The entire Nation and the world watched with dismay as news reports chronicled the gross mismanagement and abuse thrust upon the people of New Orleans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

I told President Bush then that I did not think God would be pleased with our response to the disaster.

Sadly, I am not convinced that He would pleased with our current response.

One and a half years after the hurricane hit, thousands of Americans remain displaced, their lives and families torn apart first by the storm, and second by the resulting bureaucratic mismanagement.

We do not know for sure how many families remain displaced, but our most conservative estimates indicate that at least 150,000 are still affected.

Make no mistake: The people of the Gulf Coast region want to return home, but many of them cannot find affordable housing to which to return.

Public housing was decimated by the storm. Approximately 70 percent of the 300,000 homes that were severely damaged or destroyed by Hurricane Katrina belonged to low-income families.

Homeowners who want to return have been asked to do the impossible. We have appropriated the necessary funds to help rebuild the region, but the money has yet to trickle down to the people.

Today, we will take an important step in rectifying this situation by considering the ''Gulf Coast Hurricane Housing Recovery Act of 2007.''

The bill would institute much needed reforms, including: freeing up $1.2 billion in funds for Louisiana's Road Home Program, a program that compensates eligible displaced homeowners up to $150,000 for their losses; providing a stock of affordable housing by prohibiting the demolition of public housing until there is a plan in place to replace the current units; and most importantly, extending the Disaster Voucher Program, DVP, for former public housing and Section 8 voucher holders, until January 2008.

We have a moral obligation to restore a sense of normalcy to those whose lives have been affected by storms in the Gulf Coast region. They have already suffered for far too long.

For this reason, I support and will be voting in favor of H.R. 1227, the ''Gulf Coast Hurricane Housing Recovery Act of 2007.''

I would like to thank Chairwoman MAXINE WATERS and Chairman BARNEY FRANK for their leadership in introducing this vitally important legislation and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Chairman, I stand today in opposition to this rule and the underlying legislation, H.R. 1227, the Gulf Coast Hurricane Housing Recovery Act of 2007. The stated goal of H.R. 1227—to facilitate the speedy recovery of renters and homeowners who are still displaced by Hurricane Katrina—is a worthy one. However, this legislation will not achieve this goal, and will in fact make matters worse.

The Disaster Voucher Program is currently a temporary program, but H.R. 1227 would extend it into a permanent voucher. Furthermore, it would require HUD to provide tenant replacement vouchers for all public housing units not brought back on line, including those slated for demolition prior to the storms. In other words, this bill mandates the reconstruction of a previously flawed public housing system in New Orleans, rather than addressing root problems and looking for new solutions.

In addition, Mr. Chairman, H.R. 1227 not only calls for the reconstruction of a failed system, but it does so in a very costly manner. The CBO estimates that H.R. 1227 would increase direct spending by $224 million in 2007 and by $469 million between 2007 and 2012.

H.R. 1227 simply ignores "pay-as-you-go" rules and provides new funding without finding a way to pay for it. Chairman FRANK, the distinguished Chair of the Committee on Financial Services, has stated that H.R. 1227 was symbolic of a commitment to helping the poor no matter what other priorities Congress has. Rather than offering those who face hardship a symbolic and irresponsible gesture, we should be looking at ways to encourage reform of New Orleans' public housing system and ensure a workable, sustainable program that actually meets the city's needs for quality housing.

In the 109th Congress, the Republican Majority put in place a system to do exactly that. We provided more than $110 billion to hurricane-devastated Gulf Coast, including $16.7 billion for the Community Development Block Grant program. However, rather than simply attempt to re-establish a failed system, we required that states develop a comprehensive plan for addressing their housing needs. We demanded accountability, so that Katrina victims would have quality housing to return to.

As HUD Secretary Jackson said last year, everyone who wants to return home to New Orleans should be allowed to do so. The Republican Majority offered the opportunity for a better home to return to. We should be focusing on how to implement a comprehensive, long-term plan to address this range of issues that challenge the Gulf Region. We can accomplish much of this with the funds that we already made available in the previous Congress. This bill, however, simply appropriates new funds to recreate old failures. It is not a solution; it is the perpetuation of problems.

Mr. Chairman, Members were given notice late Friday that their amendments to H.R. 1227 would be due by early Monday morning. Hardly enough time for Members to formulate substantive amendments. I requested last night during the Rules Committee hearing that we grant this bill a modified open rule—one that allows any Member the opportunity to submit their amendments for consideration by preprinting them in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD the day before. Unfortunately, we were denied, amendments were shut out yet again, and I believe this bill could suffer for it.

Mr. Chairman, again, I oppose this restrictive rule and the underlying legislation.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the amendment in the nature of a substitute printed in the bill, modified by the amendment printed in part A of House Report 110–53, is adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of further amendment under the 5-minute rule and shall be considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 1227

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Gulf Coast Hurricane Housing Recovery Act of 2007".

SEC. 2. LIMITATION ON USE OF AUTHORIZED AMOUNTS.

None of the amounts authorized by this Act may be used to lobby or retain a lobbyist for the purpose of influencing a Federal, State, or local governmental entity or officer.

TITLE I—COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS

SEC. 101. FLEXIBILITY OF FEDERAL FUNDS FOR ROAD HOME PROGRAM.

(a) PROHIBITION OF RESTRICTION ON USE OF AMOUNTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2) and notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency may not prohibit or restrict the use, by the State of Louisiana under the Road Home Program of such State, of any amounts specified in paragraph (3) based upon the existence or extent of any requirement or condition under such program that—

(A) limits or reduces the amount made available to an eligible homeowner who does not agree to remain an owner and occupant of a home in Louisiana; or

(B) waives the applicability of any limitation or reduction referred to in subparagraph (A) for homeowners who are elderly or senior citizens.

(2) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Except as provided in paragraph (1), all other provisions of section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170c) shall apply to amounts specified in paragraph (3) that are used by the State of Louisiana under the Road Home Program of such State.

(3) COVERED AMOUNTS.—The amounts specified in this paragraph are any amounts provided for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita under the Hazard Mitigation Grant program of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to the State of Louisiana.

(b) REPORTS.—

(1) LOUISIANA ROAD HOME PROGRAM.—The State of Louisiana shall submit reports under this subsection regarding the Road Home Program of such State to the Committees identified in paragraph (5). Each such report under this subsection shall describe and analyze the implementation, status, and effectiveness of the Road Home Program and shall include the information described in paragraph (3) regarding such program, for the applicable reporting period and for the entire period of the program.

(2) OTHER STATES' HOUSEHOLD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS FUNDED WITH CDBG DISASTER ASSISTANCE.—Each State that received amounts made available under the heading "Department of Housing and Urban Development—Community Planning and Development—Community Development Fund" in chapter 9 of title I of division B of Public Law 109–148 (119 Stat. 2779) or under such heading in chapter 9 of title II of Public Law 109–234 (120 Stat. 472) shall submit reports under this subsection regarding each grant program of the State for assistance for individual households funded in whole or in part with such amounts to the Committees identified in paragraph (5). Each such report under this subsection shall describe and analyze the implementation, status, and effectiveness of each such grant program and shall include the information described in paragraph (3) regarding each such program, for the applicable reporting period and for the entire period of such program.

(3) CONTENTS.—The information described in this paragraph with respect to a program is the following information:

(A) The number of applications submitted for assistance under the program.

(B) The number of households for which assistance has been provided under the program.

(C) The average amount of assistance provided for each household under the program and the total amount of assistance provided under the program.

(D) The number of personnel involved in executing all aspects of the program.

(E) Actions taken to improve the program and recommendations for further such improvements.

(4) REPORTING PERIODS.—With respect to any program described in paragraph (1) or (2), the first report under this subsection shall be submitted not later than the expiration of the 30-day period that begins upon the date of the enactment of this Act. Reports shall be submitted, during the term of each such program, not later than the expiration of each successive (A) 30-day period thereafter, in the case of the program described in paragraph (1), and (B) calendar quarter thereafter, in the case of the programs described in paragraph (2).

(5) RECEIVING COMMITTEES.—The Committees specified in this paragraph are—

(A) the Committees on Financial Services and Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committees on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

(c) NEW ORLEANS REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY PILOT PROGRAM.—

(1) AVAILABILITY OF AMOUNTS.—The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall require the State of Louisiana to make available, from any amounts made available for such State under the heading "Department of Housing and Urban Development—Community Planning and Development—Community Development Fund" in chapter 9 of title I of division B of Public Law 109–148 (119 Stat. 2779) or under such heading in chapter 9 of title II of Public Law 109–234 (120 Stat. 472) and that remain unexpended, $15,000,000 to the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (in this subsection referred to as the "Redevelopment Authority"), subject to paragraph (3), only for use to carry out the pilot program under this subsection.

(2) PURPOSE.—The pilot program under this subsection shall fund, through the combination of amounts provided under this subsection with public and private capital from other sources, the purchase or costs associated with the acquisition or disposition of individual parcels of land in New Orleans, Louisiana, by the Redevelopment Authority to be aggregated, assembled, and sold for the purpose of development by private entities only in accordance with, and subject to, the Orleans Parish Recovery Plan, developed and adopted by the City of New Orleans. The costs associated with acquisition or

disposition of a parcel of land may include costs for activities described in paragraph (3)(C) with respect to such parcel and costs described in paragraph (3)(F).

(3) CERTIFICATIONS.—The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development may make amounts available pursuant to paragraph (1) to the Redevelopment Authority only upon the submission to the Secretary of certifications, sufficient in the determination of the Secretary to ensure that the Redevelopment Authority—

(A) has the authority to purchase land for resale for the purpose of development in accordance with the pilot program under this subsection;

(B) has bonding authority (either on its own or through a State bonding agency) or has credit enhancements sufficient to support public/private financing to acquire land for the purposes of the pilot program under this subsection;

(C) has the authority and capacity to ensure clean title to land sold under the pilot program and to reduce the risk attributable to and indemnify against environmental, flood, and other liabilities.

(D) will provide a first right to purchase any land acquired by the Redevelopment Authority to the seller who sold the land to the Redevelopment Authority;

(E) has in place sufficient internal controls to ensure that funds made available under this subsection may not be used to fund salaries or other administrative costs of the employees of the Redevelopment Authority; and

(F) will, in carrying out the pilot program under this subsection, consult with the Office of Recovery Management of the City of New Orleans regarding coordination of activities under the program with the Recovery Plan referred to in paragraph (2), reimbursement of such City for costs incurred in support of the program, and use of program income and other amounts generated through the program.

(4) DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out the pilot program under this subsection, the Redevelopment Authority shall—

(A) sell land acquired under the pilot program only as provided in paragraph (2);

(B) use any proceeds from the sale of such land to replenish funds available for use under the pilot program for the purpose of acquiring new parcels of land or to repay any private financing for such purchases;

(C) sell land only—

(i) to purchasers who agree to develop such sites for sale to the public; or

(ii) to purchasers pursuant to paragraph (3)(D); and

(D) in the case of a purchaser of land pursuant to paragraph (3)(D), ensure that the developer of any adjacent parcels sold by the Redevelopment Authority makes an offer to the purchaser to develop such land for a fee.

(5) INAPPLICABILITY OF STAFFORD ACT LIMITATIONS.—Any requirements or limitations under or pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act relating to use of properties acquired with amounts made available under such Act for certain purposes, restricting development of such properties, or limiting subsequent alienation of such properties shall not apply to amounts provided under this subsection or properties acquired under the pilot program with such amounts.

(6) GAO STUDY AND REPORT.—Upon the expiration of the 2-year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of the pilot program carried out under this subsection to determine the effectiveness and limitations of, and potential improvements for, such program. Not later than 90 days after the expiration of such period, the Comptroller General shall submit a report to the Committees on Financial Services and Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committees on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate regarding the results of the study.

(d) ONGOING GAO REPORTS ON USE OF AMOUNTS.—

(1) QUARTERLY REPORTS.—During the period that amounts referred to in subsection (a)(3) are being expended under the Road Home Program of the Louisiana Recovery Authority, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit reports on a quarterly basis to the Committees on Financial Services and Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committees on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate. Such reports shall describe and account for the use of all such amounts expended during the applicable quarterly period and identify any waste, fraud, or abuse involved in the use of such amounts.

(2) MONITORING.—The Comptroller General shall monitor the total amount referred to in subsection (a)(3) that has been expended by such Authority and, pursuant to such monitoring—

(A) upon determining that at least two percent of such amount has been expended, shall include in the first quarterly report thereafter a written determination of such expenditure; and

(B) upon determining, at any time after the determination under subparagraph (A), that the portion of such total amount expended at such time that was subject to waste, fraud, or abuse exceeds 10 percent, shall include in the first quarterly report thereafter a certification to that effect.

(3) ACTIONS IN RESPONSE TO WASTE, FRAUD, AND ABUSE.—If at any time the Comptroller General submits a report under paragraph (1) that includes a certification under paragraph (2)(B)—

(A) the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs of the Senate shall each hold hearings within 60 days to identify the reasons for such waste, fraud, and abuse; and

(B) the Comptroller General shall submit a report to the Committees referred to in paragraph (1) within 90 days recommending actions to be taken to prevent further waste fraud and abuse in expenditure of such amounts.

SEC. 102. TREATMENT OF BENEFITS FROM OTHER PROGRAMS UNDER ROAD HOME PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b) and notwithstanding any other provision of law, to the extent that amounts made available under the heading ''Department of Housing and Urban Development—Community Planning and Development—Community Development Fund'' in chapter 9 of title I of division B of Public Law 109–148 (119 Stat. 2779), under such heading in chapter 9 of title II of Public Law 109–234 (120 Stat. 472), and under section 101 of this title, are used by the State of Louisiana under the Road Home program, the procedures preventing duplication of benefits established pursuant to the penultimate proviso under such heading in Public Law 109–148 (119 Stat. 2781) and the 15th proviso under such heading in Public Law 109–234 (120 Stat. 473) shall not apply with respect to any benefits received from hazard insurance, flood insurance, or disaster payments from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, except to the extent that the inapplicability of such procedures would result in a windfall gain under the Road Home Program to any person.

(b) APPLICABILITY.—During the period consisting of fiscal years 2008 through 2012, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall monitor the expenditure, under the Road Home Program, of amounts referred to in subsection (a) that were made available from Public Laws 109–148 and 109–234. If at any time during such period the cumulative outlays resulting from the inapplicability, pursuant to subsection (a), of the procedures referred to in such subsection preventing duplication of benefits exceed $1,250,000,000, the Secretary shall suspend the applicability of subsection (a) for the remainder of such period.

SEC. 103. ELIMINATION OF PROHIBITION OF USE FOR MATCH REQUIREMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any amounts made available before the date of the enactment of this Act for activities under the community development block grant program under title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) for expenses related to disaster relief, long-term recovery, and restoration of infrastructure in the areas impacted or distressed by the consequences of Hurricane Katrina, Rita, or Wilma in States for which the President declared a major disaster, or made available before such date of enactment for such activities for such expenses in the areas impacted or distressed by the consequences of Hurricane Dennis, may be used by a State or locality as a matching requirement, share, or contribution for any other Federal program.

(b) EFFICIENT ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, when a State, unit of general local government, or Indian tribe, or Department of Hawaiian Home Lands uses amounts referred to in subsection (a), the release of which would otherwise be subject to environmental reviews under the procedures authorized under section 104(g) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5304(g)), to match or supplement the federal assistance provided under sections 402, 403, 406, 407, or 502 of Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, and the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency conducts an environmental review that encompasses all activities assisted by such matching funds, the Director's environmental review shall satisfy all of the environmental responsibilities that would otherwise be assumed by the State, unit of general local government, Indian tribe, or Department of Hawaiian Home Lands under such section 104(g), and the requirements and procedures of such provision, including assumption of environmental review responsibilities and submission and approval of a request for release of funds and certification, shall be inapplicable, if, prior to its commitment of any matching funds for such activities, the State, unit of general local government, Indian tribe, or Department of Hawaiian Home Lands notifies the Director and the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development that it elects to defer to the Director's environmental review responsibilities. If a deferral is elected under this subsection, the Director shall be the responsible party for any liability under the applicable law if the environmental review as described in the preceding sentence is deficient in any manner.

SEC. 104. REIMBURSEMENT OF CDBG AMOUNTS USED FOR RENTAL HOUSING ASSISTANCE.

There are authorized to be appropriated, from any amounts made available before the date of the enactment of this Act under any provision of law to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for disaster relief under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act relating to the consequences of Hurricane Katrina, Rita, or Wilma that remain unobligated, and from any amounts made available before such date of enactment under any provision of law to such Agency for such disaster relief relating to the consequences of Hurricane Dennis that remain unobligated, such sums as may be necessary, to be made available to the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency for transfer to the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, for such Secretary to provide assistance under title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (42 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.) to metropolitan cities and urban counties that used amounts previously

made available under such title to provide rental housing assistance for families residing in such city or county pursuant to evacuation from their previous residences because of such hurricanes in the amount necessary to provide each such city and county with an amount equal to the aggregate amount of previous assistance under such title so used.

TITLE II—PUBLIC HOUSING

SEC. 201. SURVEY OF PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENTS.

(a) SURVEY.—The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall provide for the conducting of a survey, using appropriate scientific research methods, by an independent entity or organization, to determine, of the households who as of August 28, 2005, resided in public housing (as such term is defined in section 3(b) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437a(b))) operated or administered by the Housing Authority of New Orleans, in Louisiana—

(1) which and how many such households intend to return to residences in dwelling units described in section 202(d) of this Act, when presented with the options of—

(A) returning to residence in a repaired public housing or comparable dwelling unit in New Orleans; or

(B) continuing to receive rental housing assistance from the Federal Government; and

(2) when such households intend to return.

(b) PARTICIPATION OF RESIDENTS.—The Secretary shall solicit recommendations from resident councils and residents of public housing operated or administered by such Housing Authority in designing and conducting the survey under subsection (a).

(c) PROPOSED SURVEY DOCUMENT.—The Secretary shall submit the full research design of the proposed document to be used in conducting the survey to the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate not less than 10 business days before the commencement of such survey.

(d) REPORT.—The Secretary shall submit a report the Committees referred to in subsection (c) detailing the results of the survey conducted under subsection (a) not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 202. RIGHT OF RETURN FOR PREVIOUS RESIDENTS OF PUBLIC HOUSING.

(a) REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE DWELLING UNITS.—Not later than August 1, 2007, the Housing Authority of New Orleans shall make available for occupancy, subject to subsection (b), a number of dwelling units (including those currently occupied) described in subsection (d) that is not less than the greater of—

(1) 3,000; or

(2) the number of households who have indicated, in the survey conducted pursuant to section 201, that they intend to return to residence in public housing operated or administered by such public housing agency.

(b) RIGHT OF RETURN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject only to subsection (c), the Housing Authority of New Orleans shall make available, upon the request of any household who, as of August 28, 2005, was a tenant of public housing operated or administered by such public housing agency, occupancy for such household in a dwelling unit provided pursuant to subsection (a). As a condition of exercising a right under this paragraph to occupancy in such a dwelling unit, not later than August 1, 2007, a tenant shall provide notice to such Housing Authority of intent to exercise such right and shall identify a date that the tenant intends to occupy such a dwelling unit, which shall not be later than October 1, 2007.

(2) PREFERENCES.—In making dwelling units available to households pursuant to paragraph (1), such Housing Authority shall provide preference to each such household for occupancy in a dwelling unit in the following locations, in the following order:

(A) A dwelling unit in the same public housing project occupied by the household as of August 28, 2005, if available.

(B) A dwelling unit in the same census tract in which was located the public housing dwelling unit occupied by the household as of August 28, 2005, if available.

(C) A dwelling unit in a census tract adjacent to the census tract in which was located the public housing dwelling unit occupied by the household as of August 28, 2005, if available.

(D) A dwelling unit in the neighborhood in which was located the public housing dwelling unit occupied by the household as of August 28, 2005, if available.

(c) PROHIBITION OF EXCLUSION.—The Housing Authority of New Orleans, and any other manager of replacement dwelling units set forth in this section shall not, including through the application of any waiting list or eligibility, screening, occupancy, or other policy or practice, prevent any household referred to in subsection (b)(1) from occupying a replacement dwelling unit provided pursuant to subsection (a), except to the extent that any other provision of Federal law prohibits occupancy or tenancy of such household in the type of housing of the replacement dwelling unit provided for such household.

(d) REPLACEMENT DWELLING UNITS.—A dwelling unit described in this subsection is—

(1) a dwelling unit in public housing operated or administered by the Housing Authority of New Orleans; or

(2) a dwelling unit in other comparable housing for which the amount required to be contributed by the tenant for rent is comparable to the amount required to be contributed by the tenant for rental of a comparable public housing dwelling unit.

(e) RELOCATION ASSISTANCE.—The Housing Authority of New Orleans shall provide, to each household provided occupancy in a dwelling unit pursuant to subsection (b), assistance under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisitions Policy Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. 4601 et seq.) for relocation to such dwelling unit.

SEC. 203. ONE-FOR-ONE REPLACEMENT OF ALL PUBLIC HOUSING DWELLING UNITS.

(a) CONDITIONS ON DEMOLITION.—After the date of the enactment of this Act, the Housing Authority of New Orleans may not demolish or dispose of any dwelling unit of public housing operated or administered by such agency (including any uninhabitable unit and any unit previously approved for demolition) except pursuant to a plan for replacement of such units in accordance with, and approved by the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development pursuant to, subsection (b).

(b) PLAN REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary may not approve a plan that provides for demolition or disposition of any dwelling unit of public housing referred to in subsection (a) unless—

(1) such plan is developed with the active participation of the resident councils of, and residents of public housing operated or administered by, such Housing Authority and with the City of New Orleans, at every phase of the planning and approval process, through a process that provides opportunity for comment on specific proposals for redevelopment, demolition, or disposition;

(2) not later than 60 days before the date of the approval of such plan, such Housing Authority has convened and conducted a public hearing regarding the demolition or disposition proposed in the plan;

(3) such plan provides that for each such dwelling unit demolished or disposed of, such public housing agency will provide an additional dwelling unit through—

(A) the acquisition or development of additional public housing dwelling units; or

(B) the acquisition, development, or contracting (including through project-based assistance) of additional dwelling units that are subject to requirements regarding eligibility for occupancy, tenant contribution toward rent, and long-term affordability restrictions which are comparable to public housing units;

(4) such plan provides for the implementation of a right for households to occupancy housing in accordance with section 202;

(5) such plan provides priority in making units available under paragraph (3) to residents identified in section 201;

(6) such plan provides that the proposed demolition or disposition and relocation will be carried out in a manner that affirmatively furthers fair housing, as described in subsection (e) of section 808 of the Civil Rights Act of 1968; and

(7) to the extent that such plan provides for the provision of replacement or additional dwelling units, or redevelopment, in phases over time, such plan provides that the ratio of dwelling units described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (3) that are provided in any such single phase to the total number of dwelling units provided in such phase is not less than the ratio of the aggregate number of such dwelling units provided under the plan to the total number of dwelling units provided under the plan.

(c) INAPPLICABLE PROVISIONS.—Subparagraphs (B) and (D) of section 8(o)(13) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(13)) shall not apply with respect to vouchers used to comply with the requirements of subsection (b)(3) of this section.

(d) MONITORING.—The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall provide for the appropriate field offices of the Department to monitor and supervise enforcement of this section and plans approved under this section and to consult, regarding such monitoring and enforcement, with resident councils of, and residents of public housing operated or administered by, the Housing Authority of New Orleans and with the City of New Orleans.

SEC. 204. PROTECTION FOR PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENTS IN HURRICANE AREAS.

(a) CONDITIONS ON TRANSFER.—During the two year period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, a public housing agency may not transfer ownership of any public housing dwelling units described in subsection (h) unless the transferee enters into such binding commitments as the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development considers necessary to maintain, for the longest feasible period, the requirements regarding eligibility for occupancy in such dwelling units and tenant contribution toward rent for such dwelling units that are applicable to such units as public housing dwelling units.

(b) CONDITIONS ON DEMOLITION.—After the date of the enactment of this Act, a public housing agency may not dispose or demolish any dwelling units described in subsection (h), except pursuant to a plan for replacement of such units in accordance with, and approved by the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development pursuant to, subsection (c).

(c) PLAN REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development may not approve a plan that provides for demolition or disposition of any dwelling unit of public housing described in subsection (h) unless such plan complies with the requirements under paragraphs (1), (2), (3), (6), and (7) of section 203(b), except that such paragraphs shall be applied for purposes this subsection by substituting ''the public housing agency'' and ''applicable unit of general local government'' for ''such Housing Authority'' and ''City of New Orleans'', respectively.

(d) RELOCATION ASSISTANCE.—A public housing agency shall provide, to each household relocated pursuant to a plan under this section for demolition or disposition, assistance under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisitions Policy Act of 1970 for relocation to their new residence.

(e) RIGHT OF RETURN.—A public housing agency administering or operating public housing dwelling units described in subsection (h) has the obligation—

(1) to use its best efforts to locate tenants displaced from such public housing as a result of Hurricane Katrina or Rita; and

(2) to provide such residents occupancy in public housing dwelling units of such agency that become available for occupancy, and to ensure such residents a means to exercise such right of return.

(f) INAPPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN PROJECT-BASED VOUCHER LIMITATIONS.—Subparagraphs (B) and (D) of section 8(o)(13) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(13)) shall not apply with respect to any project-based vouchers used to comply with the requirements of a plan under subsection (c).

(g) PROHIBITION ON DISPLACEMENT FROM HABITABLE UNITS.—A public housing agency may not displace a tenant from any public housing dwelling unit described in subsection (h) that is administered or operated by such agency and is habitable (including during any period of rehabilitation), unless the agency provides a suitable and comparable dwelling unit for such tenant in the same local community as such public housing dwelling unit.

(h) COVERED PUBLIC HOUSING DWELLING UNITS.—The public housing dwelling units described in this subsection are any such dwelling units located in any area for which major disaster or emergency was declared by the President pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act as a result of Hurricane Katrina or Rita of 2005, except that such dwelling units shall not include any public housing dwelling units operated or administered by the Housing Authority of New Orleans.

SEC. 205. REPORTS ON PROPOSED CONVERSIONS OF PUBLIC HOUSING UNITS.

Not later than the expiration of the 15-day period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall submit to the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate a detailed report identifying all public housing projects located in areas impacted by Hurricane Katrina or Rita of 2005, for which plans exist to transfer ownership to other entities or agencies. Such report shall include the following information for each such project:

(1) The name and location.

(2) The number of dwelling units.

(3) The proposed new owner.

(4) The existing income eligibility and rent provisions.

(5) Duration of existing affordability restrictions.

(6) The proposed date of transfer.

(7) Any other relevant information regarding the project.

SEC. 206. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR REPAIR AND REHABILITATION.

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out activities eligible for funding under the Capital Fund under section 9 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437g) for the repair, rehabilitation, and development of public housing of the Housing Authority of New Orleans, and for community and supportive services for the residents of public housing operated or administered by the Housing Authority of New Orleans.

SEC. 207. COMPLIANCE OF EXISTING REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS.

Each request for qualification or proposal issued before the date of the enactment of this Act with respect to any public housing operated or administered by the Housing Authority of New Orleans shall, notwithstanding any existing terms of such requests, be subject to and comply with all provisions of this title and, to the extent necessary to so comply, such Housing Authority shall reissue such requests.

SEC. 208. REPORTS ON COMPLIANCE.

Not later than the expiration of the 30-day period beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act and not later than the expiration of each calendar quarter thereafter, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall submit a detailed report regarding compliance with the requirements of this title, including the resident participation requirement under section 203(b)(1), to the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate, the resident councils of, and residents of public housing operated or administered by, the Housing Authority of New Orleans, and the City of New Orleans.

SEC. 209. REQUIREMENTS REGARDING PUBLIC HOUSING CONSTRUCTION WORKERS.

Any entity that receives any Federal funds made available pursuant to this title for construction, development, rehabilitation, or repair of public housing shall verify that all workers employed by such entity and engaged in such activities—

(1) have an immigration status that allows them to legally be so employed; and

(2) have a valid form of identification or documentation indicating such immigration status.

TITLE III—DISASTER VOUCHER PROGRAM AND PROJECT-BASED RENTAL ASSISTANCE

SEC. 301. EXTENSION OF DVP PROGRAM.

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to provide assistance under the Disaster Voucher Program of the Department of Housing and Urban Development established pursuant to Public Law 109–148 (119 Stat. 2779) through January 1, 2008, and, to the extent that amounts for such purpose are made available, such program, and the authority of the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to waive requirements under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f) in administering assistance under such program, shall be so extended.

SEC. 302. CLARIFICATION OF VOUCHER ALLOCATION FORMULA FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007.

In carrying out section 21033 of the Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2007, to provide renewal funding for tenant-based rental housing assistance under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 for each public housing agency, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall make, for any public housing agency impacted by Hurricane Katrina, Rita, or Wilma, such adjustments as are appropriate to provide adequate funding to adjust for reduced voucher leasing rates and increased housing costs arising from such hurricanes.

SEC. 303. PRESERVATION OF PROJECT-BASED HOUSING ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS CONTRACTS FOR DWELLING UNITS DAMAGED OR DESTROYED.

(a) TOLLING OF CONTRACT TERM.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a project-based housing assistance payments contract for a covered assisted multifamily housing project shall not expire or be terminated because of the damage or destruction of dwelling units in the project by Hurricane Katrina or Rita. The expiration date of the contract shall be deemed to be the later of the date specified in the contract or a date that is not less than three months after the dwelling units in the project or in a replacement project are first made habitable.

(b) OWNER PROPOSALS FOR REUSE OR RE-SITING.—The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall promptly review and shall approve all feasible proposals made by owners of covered assisted multifamily housing projects submitted to the Secretary, not later than October 1, 2007, that provide for the rehabilitation of the project and the resumption of use of the assistance under the contract for the project, or, alternatively, for the transfer, pursuant to subsection (c), of the contract or, in the case of a project with an interest reduction payments contract, of the remaining budget authority under the contact, to another multifamily housing project.

(c) TRANSFER OF CONTRACT.—In the case of any covered assisted multifamily housing project, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall—

(1) in the case of a project with a project-based rental assistance payments contract described in subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) of subsection (d)(2), transfer the contract to another appropriate and habitable existing project or a project to be constructed (having the same or a different owner); and

(2) in the case of a project with an interest reduction payments contract pursuant to section 236 of the National Housing Act, use the remaining budget authority under the contract for interest reduction payments to reduce financing costs with respect to dwelling units in other habitable projects not currently so assisted, and such dwelling units shall be subject to the low-income affordability restrictions applicable to projects for which such payments are made under section 236 of the National Housing Act.

A project to which a project-based rental assistance payments contract is transferred may have a different number of units or bedroom configuration than the damaged or destroyed project if approximately the same number of individuals are expected to occupy the subsidized units in the replacement project as occupied the damaged or destroyed project.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section:

(1) COVERED ASSISTED MULTIFAMILY HOUSING PROJECT.—The term ''assisted multifamily housing project'' means a multifamily housing project that—

(A) as of the date of the enactment of this Act, is subject to a project-based rental assistance payments contract (including pursuant to subsection (a) of this section); and

(B) that was damaged or destroyed by Hurricane Katrina or Hurricane Rita of 2005.

(2) PROJECT-BASED RENTAL ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS CONTRACT.—The term ''project-based rental assistance payments contract'' includes—

(A) a contract entered into pursuant to section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f);

(B) a contract for project rental assistance pursuant to section 202(c)(2) of the Housing Act of 1959 (12 U.S.C. 1701q(c)(2));

(C) a contract for project rental assistance pursuant to section 811(d)(2) of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 8013(d)(2)); and

(D) an interest reduction payments contract pursuant to section 236 of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. 1715z–1).

SEC. 304. TENANT REPLACEMENT VOUCHERS FOR ALL LOST UNITS.

There is authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2008 such sums as may be necessary to provide tenant replacement vouchers under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f) for the number of households that is equal to—

(1) the number of assisted dwelling units (whether occupied or unoccupied) located in covered assisted multifamily housing projects (as such term is defined in section 303(d) of this Act) that are not approved for reuse or re-siting by the Secretary; plus

(2) the number of public housing dwelling units that, as of August 28, 2005, were located in areas affected by Hurricane Katrina and were considered for purposes of allocating operating and capital assistance under section 9 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (whether occupied or unoccupied), that will not be put back into use for occupancy; plus

(3) the number of public housing dwelling units that, as of September 24, 2005, were located

in areas affected by Hurricane Rita and were considered for purposes of allocating operating and capital assistance under section 9 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (whether occupied or unoccupied), that will not be put back into use for occupancy; minus

(4) the number of previously awarded enhanced vouchers for assisted dwelling units and tenant protection vouchers for public housing units covered under this section.

Any amounts made available pursuant to this section shall, upon the request of a public housing agency for such voucher assistance, be allocated to the public housing agency based on the number of dwelling units described in paragraph (1) or (2) that are located in the jurisdiction of the public housing agency.

SEC. 305. VOUCHER ASSISTANCE FOR SUPPORTIVE HOUSING.

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to provide 4,500 vouchers for project-based rental assistance under section 8(o)(13) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(13)) for use in areas impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita for supportive housing dwelling units for elderly families, persons with disabilities, or homeless persons. The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall make available to the State of Louisiana or its designee or designees, upon request, 3,000 of such vouchers. Subparagraphs (B) and (D) of section 8(o)(13) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)(13)) shall not apply with respect to vouchers made available under this section.

SEC. 306. TRANSFER OF DVP VOUCHERS TO VOUCHER PROGRAM.

(a) TRANSFER TO SECTION 8 VOUCHER PROGRAM.—There are authorized to be appropriated, for tenant-based assistance under section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)), such sums as may be necessary to provide vouchers for such assistance for each household that, as of the termination date of the Disaster Voucher Program referred to in section 301 of this Act, is assisted under such program, for the period that such household is eligible for such voucher assistance. Such voucher assistance shall be administered by the public housing agency having jurisdiction of the area in which such assisted family resides as of such termination date.

(b) TEMPORARY VOUCHERS.—If at any time a household for whom a voucher for rental housing assistance is provided pursuant to this section becomes ineligible for further such rental assistance—

(1) the public housing agency administering such voucher pursuant to this section may not provide rental assistance under such voucher for any other household;

(2) the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall recapture from such agency any remaining amounts for assistance attributable to such voucher and may not reobligate such amounts to any public housing agency; and

(3) such voucher shall not be taken into consideration for purposes of determining any future allocation of amounts for such tenant-based rental assistance for any public housing agency.

SEC. 307. IDENTIFICATION AND NOTIFICATION OF DVP-ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS NOT ASSISTED.

The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall make a good faith effort to identify all households who, as of the date of the enactment of this Act, are eligible for assistance under the Disaster Voucher Program referred to in section 301 but are not assisted under such program. Upon identification of each such household, the Secretary shall—

(1) notify such household of the rights of the household to return a public housing or other assisted dwelling unit; and

(2) to the extent that the family is eligible at such time of identification, offer the household assistance under the Disaster Voucher program.

SEC. 308. GAO STUDY OF WRONGFUL OR ERRONEOUS TERMINATION OF FEDERAL RENTAL HOUSING ASSISTANCE.

The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study of households that received Federal assistance for rental housing in connection with Hurricanes Katrina and Rita to determine if the assistance for any such households was wrongfully or erroneously terminated. The Comptroller General shall submit a report to the Congress not later than June 1, 2007, setting forth the results of the study, which shall include an estimate of how many households were subject to such wrongful or erroneous termination and how many of those households have incomes eligible for the household to receive tenant-based rental assistance under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f).

TITLE IV—DAMAGES ARISING FROM FEMA ACTIONS

SEC. 401. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS TO REIMBURSE LANDLORDS FOR DAMAGES DUE TO FEMA MANAGEMENT OF LEASES ENTERED INTO UNDER SECTION 403 OF THE STAFFORD DISASTER RELIEF ACT.

There are authorized to be appropriated, from amounts made available before the date of the enactment of this Act under any provision of law to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for disaster relief under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief Emergency Assistance Act, such sums as may be necessary for the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide reimbursement to each landlord who entered into leases to provide emergency sheltering in response to Hurricane Katrina, Rita, or Wilma of 2005, pursuant to the program of the Federal Emergency Management Agency pursuant to section 403 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170b) in the amount of actual, documented damages incurred by such landlord as a result of abrogation by such Agency of commitments entered into under such program, but not including reimbursement for any such landlord to the extent that such landlord has previously received reimbursement for such damages under any other Federal or non-Federal program.

TITLE V—FHA SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING

SEC. 501. TREATMENT OF NON-CONVEYABLE PROPERTIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in the case of any property consisting of 1- to 4-family residence that is subject to a mortgage insured under title II of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. 1707 et seq.) and was damaged or destroyed as a result of Hurricane Katrina or Rita of 2005, if there was no failure on the part of the mortgagee or servicer to provide hazard insurance for the property or to provide flood insurance coverage for the property to the extent such coverage is required under Federal law, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development—

(1) may not deny conveyance of title to the property to the Secretary and payment of the benefits of such insurance on the basis of the condition of the property or any failure to repair the property;

(2) may not reduce the amount of such insurance benefits to take into consideration any costs of repairing the property; and

(3) with respect to a property that is destroyed, condemned, demolished, or otherwise not available for conveyance of title, may pay the full benefits of such insurance to the mortgagee notwithstanding that such title is not conveyed.

(b) BUDGET ACT COMPLIANCE.—Insurance claims may be paid in accordance with subsection (a) only to the extent or in such amounts as are or have been provided in advance in appropriations Acts for the costs (as such term is defined in section 502 of the Federal Credit Reform Act of 1990 (2 U.S.C. 661(a)) of such claims.

TITLE VI—FAIR HOUSING ENFORCEMENT

SEC. 601. FAIR HOUSING INITIATIVES PROGRAM.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out section 561 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1987 (42 U.S.C. 3616a), in each of fiscal years 2008 and 2009, such sums as may be necessary, but not less than $5,000,000, for areas affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, of which, in each such fiscal year—

(1) 60 percent shall be available only for private enforcement initiatives for qualified private enforcement fair housing organizations authorized under subsection (b) of such section, and, of the amount made available in accordance with this paragraph, the Secretary shall set aside an amount for multi-year grants to qualified fair housing enforcement organizations;

(2) 20 percent shall be available only for activities authorized under paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (c) of such section; and

(3) 20 percent shall be available only for education and outreach programs authorized under subsection (d) of such section.

(b) LOW FUNDING.—If the total amount appropriated to carry out the Fair Housing Initiatives Program for either fiscal year 2008 or 2009 is less than $50,000,000, not less than 5 percent of such total amount appropriated for such fiscal year shall be available for the areas described in subsection (a) for the activities described in paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of such subsection.

(c) AVAILABILITY.—Any amounts appropriated under this section shall remain available until expended.

TITLE VII—IMPROVED DISTRIBUTION OF FEDERAL HURRICANE HOUSING FUNDS FOR HURRICANE RELIEF

SEC. 701. GAO STUDY OF IMPROVED DISTRIBUTION OF FEDERAL HOUSING FUNDS FOR HURRICANE RELIEF.

(a) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study to examine methods of improving the distribution of Federal housing funds to assist States covered by this Act with recovery from hurricanes, which shall include identifying and analyzing—

(1) the Federal and State agencies used in the past to disburse such funds and the strengths and weakness of existing programs;

(2) the means by and extent to which critical information relating to hurricane recovery, such as property valuations, is shared among various State and Federal agencies;

(3) program requirements that create impediments to the distribution of such funds that can be eliminated or streamlined;

(4) housing laws and regulations that have caused programs to be developed in a manner that complies with statutory requirements but fails to meet the housing objectives or needs of the States or the Federal Government;

(5) laws relating to privacy and impediments raised by housing laws to the sharing, between the Federal Government and State governments, and private industry, of critical information relating to hurricane recovery;

(6) methods of streamlining applications for and underwriting of Federal housing grant or loan programs; and

(7) how to establish more equitable Federal housing laws regarding duplication of benefits.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General shall submit to the Congress a report describing the results of the study and any recommendations regarding the issues analyzed under the study.

TITLE VIII—COMMENDING AMERICANS FOR THEIR REBUILDING EFFORTS

SEC. 801. COMMENDING AMERICANS.

(a) CONGRESSIONAL FINDINGS.—The Congress finds that—

(1) over 500,000 individuals in the United States have volunteered their time in helping rebuild the Gulf Coast region in the aftermath of Hurricane's Katrina and Rita;

(2) over $3,500,000,000 in cash and in-kind donations have been made for hurricane victims;

(3) 40,000,000 pounds of food have been distributed by Catholic Charities' Food Bank through hurricane relief efforts;

(4) almost 7,000,000 hot meals have been served by Salvation Army volunteers in hurricane relief efforts;

(5) over 10,000,000 college students have devoted their spring and fall breaks to hurricane relief efforts;

(6) almost 20,000 families displaced as a result of the hurricanes have been supported by Traveler's Aid volunteers;

(7) faith-based organizations, such as Jewish Family Services, Lutheran Disaster Response, the United Methodist Committee on Relief, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the National Baptist Convention of America, Inc., the Progressive National Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Convention, and the African Methodist Episcopal Church have contributed tens of thousands of man-hours for hurricane relief; and

(8) community-based organizations, such as the Boys and Girls Club of America, Junior League, Boy and Girl Scouts of America, and the YMCA, have had thousands of members volunteer with the cleanup in the Gulf States.

(b) COMMENDATION.—The Congress hereby commends the actions and efforts by the remarkable individuals and organizations who contributed to the hurricane relief effort and recognizes that the rebuilding of the Gulf Coast region rests on the selfless dedication of private individuals and community spirit.

The CHAIRMAN. No further amendment to the committee amendment is in order except those printed in part B of the report. Each further amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MS. CORRINE BROWN OF FLORIDA

The CHAIRMAN. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part B of House Report 110–53.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 1 offered by Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida:

In section 202(d), strike paragraph (2) and insert the following new paragraph:

(2) a dwelling unit in other comparable housing located in the jurisdiction of the Housing Authority of New Orleans for which the sum of the amount required to be contributed by the tenant for rent and any separate utility costs for such unit borne by the tenant is comparable to the sum of the amount required to be contributed by the tenant for rental of a comparable public housing dwelling unit and any separate utility costs for such unit borne by the tenant.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 254, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CORRINE BROWN) and a Member opposed each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Chairman, before I begin, I want to thank Mr. BARNEY FRANK, chairman of the committee, and MAXINE WATERS and other members of the Committee on Financial Services for doing such a fine job in crafting this bill.

I rise in support of H.R. 1227, the Gulf Coast Housing Recovery Act. I truly believe this bill is a tremendous victory for the gulf coast that was affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. I once again want to commend my colleagues.

Before I start talking about my amendment, let me talk about what happened during the hurricane because I saw something during Hurricane Katrina that I have never seen in the 25 years I have been an elected official and certainly the 15 years I have been a Member of Congress. I saw something in the government that I have never seen before. I saw a government that was not just incompetent, but I saw a government that did not care about its people. I thought I was in a third world, and I have got to take a moment to commend my community because we all watched it on television and were horrified. We came together.

I represent the Jacksonville area, and we came together as a community and we sent over 16 tractor-trailers full of goods and services to New Orleans. We came together as a community. It was the business community. It was Democrats; it was Republicans. It was students, and we filled those tractor-trailers and sent them in there until the government could kick in.

What we saw was a government that was not capable of responding. Well, when you look at the top 20 positions, and one police officer told me that you don't put people in positions over disasters that have public relations backgrounds. You make them ambassadors. But you put people in to head up disasters that are life and death to your communities that have the background and experience to do the job. That certainly was not the position of FEMA or Homeland Security. I want to put that on the table before I begin.

Now, this particular amendment would allow that residents returning would have the opportunity to include their utility bill into the payment for their rent. This is something that was taking place prior to, and this would be something that would be permitted under my amendment.

Many public housing residents are being forced into deeper debt because of utility bills. Public housing residents that lived in the areas of Rita and Katrina had their monthly rent included in their utilities. Currently, their vouchers do not include utilities, and many public housing residents are forced to make tough choices.

I have three such examples. Bobby Jennings lived in C.J. Peete for 34 years prior to Katrina. She paid income-based rent in the amount of $167 per month, which included utilities. Now she lives in another part and she pays $1,050 in rent which is not covered by her rent voucher, and she must pay $429 per month out of pocket. Well, her average income, she is a senior citizen on a fixed income, is $655 per month. So $300 per month she has to come up with.

And that is the same for Mrs. Gloria Williams who was paying $185 per month. Now she pays $1,128 per month and she must come up with $406 per month.

□ 1600

The last person is Mrs. Wright. She lived in public housing for over 20 years. She was paying the amount of $290 per month. She is in Houston, Texas. She now pays $625 a month, and she has to come up with an average of $250 a month for utilities. So utilities impose a disproportionate burden for the poor. And for the average American, utility bills only comprise 6 to 10 percent of household income. In this area it is 32 to 53 percent. Those receiving vouchers have already demonstrated their great need for assistance, and they are being shortchanged. We can't allow this to continue, and we must provide proper funding to those receiving this voucher.

This amendment would ensure that utilities are part of the housing voucher for residents returning to New Orleans. The Congressional Budget Office said that it would have no direct impact as far as spending is concerned.

I urge the adoption of this amendment to help people like Mrs. Jennings, Mrs. Williams and Mrs. Wright receive the assistance they greatly deserve.

I yield to the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. WATERS. I would like to thank the gentlewoman from Florida for all the work she has done to help the residents of New Orleans and the gulf coast. I know she was down there days after the hurricane hit, and I know of her passion. I am very appreciative for the help she has given us on this legislation, and I would like to assure her that those returning residents will have included in their rent the cost of the utility bills. So please do not worry about that. It will be done.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I would join my colleague in supporting this particular amendment.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Thank you.

As you said, I have been to New Orleans and the region, really, some eight times. I tell them they've got a Member-at-large in me because I feel a great passion because you saw an example of a government that did not work, but I hate to say is not working and still is not working. Eighteen months later, we have a government, and you can say it's the local government, you can say it's the State government, but I am saying the Federal

Government, shame on all of us because the people don't care why it's not working. The point is the government is not working for them.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak in opposition to the amendment, although I am not opposed to the amendment, but for clarification.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Illinois is recognized for 10 minutes.

Mrs. BIGGERT. It is my understanding, and I know that your Dear Colleague letter states that currently vouchers of the public housing residents and section 8 vouchers do not include utilities. It is my understanding that prior to Katrina and Rita, the public housing residents had vouchers that did include utilities.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. BIGGERT. I yield to the gentlewoman.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. That is correct. Before the hurricane, the utilities were a part of their vouchers, yes, ma'am.

Mrs. BIGGERT. So this really is just a reclarification of how it was done in the past.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. That is correct.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, I have no objection to the bill.

The other thing that worries me, though, is just that you said you saw a government that did not care about its people. And I think certainly we have seen people in the government here that care very much; $110 billion has been turned over to those States to use to rebuild. I just think that we all care about it, we as the government, we in the administration, and I think the State and the local government.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Let me clarify my statement.

Mrs. BIGGERT. I yield to the gentlelady.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Let me clarify my statement.

First of all, let me say that during the time of the hurricane, what I saw was a government that didn't care. It wasn't working. Everybody in the whole country, in fact, in the whole world saw that. It was a real serious indictment on the Bush administration that was in charge.

But I said since that time people have blamed the local government, the State government and the Federal Government. Yes, we have done our part, but perhaps we could have done a better job in spelling out how that money is to be used, because regardless of how much money we have appropriated, and we have appropriated and we have done a good job with that, the money has not gotten down to the people that we intended for it to get to.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Reclaiming my time, let's just say that we are moving forward. I think this bill is a way to move forward, and I would accept the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CORRINE BROWN).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MS. CORRINE BROWN OF FLORIDA

The CHAIRMAN. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part B of House Report 110–53.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 2 offered by Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida:

In section, 202(b)(1), before ''provide notice'' insert. ''(A)'':

Before the period at the end of section 202(b)(1) insert the following: '', or (B} shall provide notice to such Housing Authority that the tenant is requesting an extension of the period to exercise such right. If, not later than August 1, 2007, a tenant provides notice requesting such an extension, as a condition of exercising a right under this paragraph to occupancy in such a dwelling unit, not later than October 1, 2007, the tenant shall provide notice to such Housing Authority of intent to exercise such right and shall identify a date that the tenant intends to occupy such a dwelling unit, which shall not be later than December 1, 2007''.

At the end of section 202, add the following new subsection:

(f) ASSISTANCE IN TERMINATING EXISTING LEASES.—The Housing Authority of New Orleans shall offer to each household who provides to such Authority notice of intent in accordance with subsection exercise a right under such subsection to occupancy in a dwelling unit, and shall provide, upon the request of any such household, assistance to such household in negotiating the termination of any lease on a dwelling unit in which the household resides at the time of the household is provided a occupancy in dwelling unit under this section.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 254, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CORRINE BROWN) and a Member opposed each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Before I decide whether to withdraw my amendment, I have some questions for Ms. WATERS about the present status of the deadlines that are in the bill, and maybe she can clarify it for me. I have a concern that we have certain dates and deadlines in this bill. And, of course, this bill, when it passes the House, has to go to the Senate, and we have certain deadlines in that bill, and then the President has to sign it. I am concerned that when it is signed, that the residents won't have an adequate amount of time to respond.

As you well know, in the hearing that took place 18 months ago, HUD and Public Housing said of the residents that they had surveyed that they had only contacted about 25 percent. And so I want to make sure that those people are not disadvantaged and we are all on the same page. We all care about the same people.

Can you clarify for me the status of that situation?

Ms. WATERS. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. I yield to the gentlewoman from California.

Ms. WATERS. I thank the gentlelady for yielding, and I know of her concern about making sure that all the residents have the opportunity to return.

In our bill we have notification for return by August 1, and they have until October to honor the August 1 notification.

Now, let me just say that we crafted this for several reasons. One is we did not want to be in the position of taking people out of where they are living now and forcing them to have to take their children out of school, but we wanted them to return in time to enroll the children in school for the semester starting in September. So we think that accomplishes that. And I know that you are concerned about all the people having adequate time.

Let me tell you something else that was taken into consideration. Mr. NEUGEBAUER, who was with us, has past experience as a developer-contractor type. He made it very clear that when you rehab a unit, that if it is not occupied by a certain length of time, then you are going to have to go back 6 months later and put the same amount of dollars in again to rehab that unit that has been sitting vacant; because of the moisture and everything in the area, that you just cannot maintain the properties without them being inhabited.

So for those two reasons, what we think makes good sense in terms of giving people an adequate period of time, and so that we don't have to spend additional money to rehab a unit the second time, we think that this would do well for those residents.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. In my experience the gentlewoman, someone who is not on the committee and not from the district, has really made herself an expert and an advocate. I would say this: If as this goes forward there are delays in the legislative process, yes, of course, it would be sensible to deal with the deadlines. That is, we should think of the deadlines almost conceptually as based on a certain timeline of legislation. If the basic decisions by the government slip, then the deadline should be adjusted accordingly.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. FRANK, I have an additional question for you, then, before I withdraw

this amendment, and that pertains to the Road Home program.

Are you prepared to answer questions about that program?

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Some of it I am, and some of it I am not. I am not an expert on it, but go ahead.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. My question, and it is from going down to New Orleans and talking to the residents, their concern is that, as someone said earlier, we have appropriated billions of dollars for that area. I want to know to this date how much money has been spent on the Road Home program; how much money has been expended for administrative costs; and then, what kind of fees have been attached?

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Well, I would say this, if the gentlewoman would yield to me: It is our hope, and the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BAKER) was very active in this, and we listened to the others, the two gentlemen from Louisiana, Mr. MELANCON and Mr. JEFFERSON, we believe we have responded to some of the issues. There was, for instance, a debate between FEMA. FEMA didn't like some aspects of the Road Home regarding whether or not you got a penalty for not staying in the State and whether or not elderly people were done. That was pulled. We have in this bill said to FEMA, please, leave that one alone. So we hope we have sped it up. No one I know of thinks that the rate of spendout of the Road Home has been sufficient to date. We hope this bill makes it better, but I don't have all the details.

Ms. WATERS. In addition to that information, we have placed in this bill a requirement that the Road Home program must report to us every 30 days, because we are watching them very closely, we have let them know that we were not happy with the progress, and now we have information coming into us that will help us to see how fast they are moving, and we will take additional action if we have to.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. I have one last question on this program before I withdraw my amendment.

My understanding is if a person lives in their house and is eligible for $50,000, that we can charge fees up to $30,000 if that person is not coming back to the New Orleans area.

Ms. WATERS. No, I am not aware of that, Congresswoman. What I do know is this: We have up to $150,000 in subsidy for homeowners to rebuild their homes. Some qualify for the entire amount, others qualify for different amounts based on whether or not they had insurance or whether or not there are other deductibles. My understanding is that if they decide not to come back, that they can sell their properties, and it is supposed to be at fair market value.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. I am going to withdraw my amendment at this time, Mr. Chairman. I will be talking to both Chairs of the committee.

I want to let you know that I sincerely thank both of you for the leadership that you have shown in this area. And just remember, they do have a Member-at-large.

Ms. WATERS. If I may, if you will yield, I need to make one additional comment that I was just reminded of, that if they do not return to New Orleans, there is a penalty. That is designed to rebuild the neighborhoods and get people coming back. But there is a 30 percent penalty.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Thirty percent of money. In addition, my understanding is that, for example, if that person didn't have insurance, and even though the insurance told them that they were not in the area, and they have that in writing, they weren't in the flood area, they were penalized 30 percent. So that is $30,000. So then a person could end up with $20,000 for their home, and they cannot rebuild with that.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. If the gentlewoman would yield, there is one other aspect that was resolved. In the committee we adopted an amendment offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BAKER) which went in the other direction and nullified one set of offsets when the gentleman from Louisiana mentioned that we had a scoring problem with CBO. There was an offset procedure for certain tax things, and frankly we felt that was not only somewhat unfair, but it was also one thing that held up the speed because we tried to offset that on the other hand.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. I want to thank both of you.

I rise in support of H.R. 1227, the Gulf Coast Housing Recovery Act. I truly believe this bill is a tremendous victory for the Gulf Coast and those affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. I commend my colleague Congressman BARNEY FRANK, Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS and the other Members of the Committee on Financial Services for the fine job crafting this bill.

I also rise in support of my amendment that would give Katrina public housing residents more time to return home.

Eighteen months after Hurricane Katrina, more than 4,000 families have not returned to New Orleans because most public housing remains closed. Public housing residents want to return and rebuild their city and their lives. If Congress is serious about the slogan "Bring New Orleans Back," HUD and HANO must reopen public housing and make repairs, where necessary. Everyone should be permitted to return—not just the rich.

HUD and HANO have been doing everything they can to make sure public housing residents don't return. HUD planned to demolish 5,000 units with no clear plan or timeline for bringing back these families. These public housing developments are some of the most durable housing in New Orleans. Given the solid infrastructure of these buildings and the minor damage incurred, it is clear that renovation is more cost-effective than demolition. Instead of families moving back into their affordable housing units to get back to work, and help rebuild their lives, their communities, and their city, HUD contributes to the dearth of affordable housing in New Orleans, and keeps these families displaced and scattered across the country with no hope of returning.

HUD has dropped the ball on keeping contact with displaced families. At a February 22, 2007 field hearing in New Orleans for the House Committee on Financial Services, Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity, Chairman C. Donald Babers of the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) told the subcommittee that out of 978 residents they recently tried to contact, they only made contact with about 237 residents. Mr. Babers said that they were unable to reach about 740 residents. Given that HUD and HANO only one month ago could not reach over 75 percent of the displaced public housing residents, Congress must ensure that residents do not lose the opportunity to move back to their homes simply because HANO and HUD cannot find them in a timely manner.

Residents want to come home to be closer to their families and neighbors, to return to jobs or get new jobs in the reconstruction industry. HUD reported in October 2006 that an estimated 65–70 percent of families want to return to New Orleans. Congress must give these families every chance to come home.

My amendment provides two deadlines of August 1, 2007 and October 1, 2007 for residents to declare their intent to return. The reoccupancy deadlines are October 1, 2007 and December 1, 2007. It also extends assistance to those who ask for help with early termination of leases.

I urge my colleagues to adopt this amendment so that we can Bring New Orleans Back.

Mr. Chairman, I withdraw my amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, the amendment is withdrawn.

There was no objection.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. HENSARLING

The CHAIRMAN. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in part B of House Report 110–53.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 3 offered by Mr. HENSARLING:

At the end of title III, add the following new section:

SEC. 308. WORK REQUIREMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), each individual who is 18 years of age or older and is a member of a household residing in a dwelling for which rental assistance is provided pursuant to an extension or authorization of rental assistance provided under this title shall, as a condition of the continued provision of such assistance on behalf of such household, perform not fewer than 20 hours of approved work activities (as such term is defined in section 407(d) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 607(d))) per week.

(b) EXEMPTION.—The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall provide an exemption from the applicability of paragraph (1) for any individual who—

(1) is 62 years of age or older;

(2) is a blind or disabled individual, as defined under section 216(i)(1) or 1614 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 416(i)(1); 1382c), and who is unable to comply with this section, or is a primary caretaker of such individual;

(3) is engaged in a work activity (as such term is defined in section 407(d) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 607(d)), as in effect on and after July 1, 1997));

(4) meets the requirements for being exempted from having to engage in a work activity under the State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) or under any other welfare program of the State in which the public housing agency administering rental assistance described in subsection (a) is located, including a State-administered welfare-to-work program;

(5) is in a family receiving assistance under a State program funded under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) or under any other welfare program of the State in which the public housing agency administering such rental assistance is located, including a State-administered welfare-to-work program, and has not been found by the State or other administering entity to be in noncompliance with such program; or

(6) is a single custodial parent caring for a child who has not attained 6 years of age, and the individual proves that the individual has a demonstrated inability (as determined by the State) to obtain needed child care, for one or more of the following reasons:

(A) Unavailability of appropriate child care within a reasonable distance from the individual's home or work site.

(B) Unavailability or unsuitability of informal child care by a relative or under other arrangements.

(C) Unavailability of appropriate and affordable formal child care arrangements.

(c) ADMINISTRATION.—A public housing agency providing rental assistance described in subsection (a) may administer the work activities requirement under this section directly, through a resident organization, or through a contractor having experience in administering work activities programs within the service area of the public housing agency. The Secretary may establish qualifications for such organizations and contractors.

(d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There are authorized to be appropriated, from any amounts made available before the date of the enactment of this Act under any provision of law to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for disaster relief under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act relating to the consequences of Hurricane Katrina, Rita, or Wilma that remain unobligated, such sums as may be necessary for the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to carry out this section.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 254, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) and a Member opposed each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

□ 1615

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, first, I wish to associate myself with the comments of my colleague from Texas and complimenting our chairman, the gentleman from Massachusetts, in having a very fair and open hearing on this legislation. I often disagree with his philosophy, but I know that he is sincere in what he is trying to do, and I appreciate the fairness with which he has operated the committee and allowed these amendments come to the floor.

I also want to thank Ranking Member BACHUS for his contribution to this legislation in trying to ensure that we do the right thing in New Orleans, that things can actually be better, that we don't have to return to the way that things were.

Clearly, these hurricanes represented one of the great natural tragedies in the history of America, and so many of us had friends and family who were affected. My in-laws live in the New Orleans area. For several days, my wife didn't know if her father had survived the hurricane. It turns out he was at the convention center along with thousands of others in fairly deplorable conditions.

But my in-laws were among the lucky ones: they survived. Although their home was damaged, it has been rebuilt. But I know how this has impacted people. I have been to the gulf coast and seen the hurt, yet seen the hope as well, and hope is still alive.

But 18, 19 months later, we have to ask ourselves this question, How do we best help going forward? America has been very generous, very generous with both their public and private funds. People throughout the Fifth Congressional District of Texas opened up their arms, opened up their wallets, opened up their homes to victims of the hurricanes.

The Federal taxpayer has now contributed well over $100 billion to this effort. Nobody can say that the American people have not been generous.

But I think we have to ask ourselves, Mr. Chairman, how do we best help going forward? I do not believe that it is always an additional Federal check. We also have to make sure that a great physical tragedy of this century or this generation doesn't turn out to be a great fiscal tragedy for the next generation as well.

This amendment would try to take a modest step towards achieving those goals. It has everything to do with providing a work-related requirement that this Congress is already well acquainted with that helped revolutionize welfare reform 10 years ago, and apply it going forward to those who are recipients of the vouchers and the housing programs under this bill.

Over 10 years ago, when Congress passed Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, we began the process of ending welfare as we had known it. Instead, we replaced it in this program with a temporary assistance-based program that was based on work and self-sufficiency and responsibility and personal dignity.

Now, at the time there were countless naysayers who said this was cruel and unusual. I offered this amendment in committee. It was called un- American. They said it had no compassion. They said the program would never work, that young mothers would somehow be thrown out into the streets with starving children, that somehow they could not find a job, much less hold a job.

Mr. Chairman, the naysayers were wrong then, and the naysayers are wrong now. If you look at the record, you will see that after we passed this TANF welfare reform and created incentives for self-sufficiency, the number of families receiving cash welfare steadily declined from an all-time peak of 5.1 million families in March of 1994 to 1.9 million families in September of 2006. It represents the lowest number of people on cash public assistance rolls in over 35 years. This, I believe, is compassionate.

Child poverty has fallen and 1.6 million fewer children live in poverty today than in 1995 because of the work-related requirements that were in TANF. Child poverty has fallen dramatically, as I said. Employment of young, single mothers has doubled. Employing mothers who have never been married is up by more than 50 percent. Employment of single mothers who dropped out of high school is up by two-thirds, and we have seen unprecedented declines in poverty among children of single moms, from 50.3 percent a decade ago to 41.9 percent in 2004.

Again, the naysayers were wrong then, and the same naysayers are wrong yet again today.

Welfare reform worked 10 years ago because we cared enough to tell people, when they were facing challenges, that we were not going to allow them to give up trying. Now we have the same chance to extend this, to empower people who have been impacted by these terrible gulf coast hurricanes, some who have been stuck in public housing for 10, 15 or 20 years. We can show them that there is a better life, and it is within their reach; but the work is key to obtaining this.

So, again, my amendment is a simple one. It takes the list of approved work-related activities that have already been established over 10 years ago in welfare reform, as we know in TANF, and applies it to the recipients of this special public housing assistance that we are providing in this bill. Those recipients would be required to perform a minimum of 20 hours per week of work-related activities to help them get back on the road to self-sufficiency and move beyond public housing once and for all.

Now, the precedent for requiring recipients of public housing assistance to earn benefits is not new. In 1998, this body passed a law requiring able-bodied people living in public housing to perform 8 hours a month of community service with the notion that individuals ought to give back to their communities. My amendment would simply build on that notion and help put people back on the road to self-sufficiency.

Now, I know some people will say that individuals can't find work because there are simply no jobs to be found; therefore, this amendment will not work.

But that is a false charge on two counts. First, there are clearly entry-level jobs that are still available, for

example, in New Orleans. Pick up the want ads. You will see plenty of entry-level positions that are there, and they are trying to rebuild a great city. Workers are still needed to help rebuild New Orleans. So it is false on one account.

Second of all, it is false because under the TANF requirement, no one is required to get a job if the jobs don't exist. Instead, there are 12 distinct categories of work-related activities to give individuals a broad spectrum of activities to satisfy this requirement. It includes attempting to find work, vocational education, community service and, in some instances, providing child care services to others. Again, these are all activities designed to help people begin on the road to self-sufficiency.

To ensure that only the able-bodied are affected by this requirement, my amendment exempts children, senior citizens, the disabled, those already exempt from TANF work requirements and those who cannot find appropriate or affordable child care.

Mr. Chairman, the lessons of welfare reform are very clear. By expecting more of people, you can help them expect more out of themselves. We have the opportunity to extend that, the great lessons and the great benefits of that today. We should not miss any opportunity to help break this cycle of dependency and help people change their lives for the better.

We need to help the people of the gulf coast, but we need to help the taxpayers as well. We need to ensure that the American people don't face a challenge like this going forward in the future.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady from California is recognized for 10 minutes.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 1 minute.

This bill is about stabilizing families who have been displaced because of a natural disaster. These are people who are trying to return home. The people that he is referring to are people who come from various walks of life. Some of them do work, even though they live in public housing. Some of them are on fixed income, some are elderly, some are disabled and some of them are in welfare programs already.

This amendment is not needed. It is not proper. It is not the time that should be utilized to try and do something that really has already been taken care of in welfare reform. We should be about the business of returning people to their homes.

Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLEAVER).

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Chairman, may I just inquire of the gentleman from Texas whether or not there is data available that would suggest the need for this amendment. I don't like to just oppose amendments just because. Is there data available that would suggest a need for this?

Mr. HENSARLING. Does the gentleman yield time?

Mr. CLEAVER. Yes.

Mr. HENSARLING. I am not sure what data you would be looking for. I believe it's a very important principle. The data that I have seen is the data that I have cited on the benefits of applying a work-related requirement to an income-based program.

Mr. CLEAVER. I am talking about New Orleans and Mississippi.

Mr. HENSARLING. Well, I would apply the statistics in the data that I have seen from the improvements in TANF to this program.

Mr. CLEAVER. Thank you. The problem with that, and I appreciate your interest in this issue, and I am sure you probably are not aware of the fact that in New Orleans there are 36,000 participants in TANF. All but 5,000 are children; all but 5,000 are children. This legislation is saying we want children to volunteer 20 hours a week in order to receive assistance.

In addition to that, we are spending about $5 billion a week in Iraq, and we are building housing, but we are not requiring Iraqis to volunteer in order to be the recipients of the largesse of the American taxpayers.

The assumption here is that the people don't need to work and so they somehow have to be coerced into working. As a former resident of public housing, there is a new issue arising, and that is that many of the people in public housing are elderly.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I want to commend the distinguished lady from California and our chairman, Mr. FRANK, for doing an excellent job in leading us.

This amendment represents the ugly side of this Nation. This amendment is cruel, it is cold, it is calculating, and it is pandering to the schizophrenic dichotomy that has plagued this Nation since they first brought Africans on these shores from Africa, and that is the issue of race and poverty.

Let me tell you something, gentleman. Where were you? Where was your amendment when the Twin Towers were hit and people of New York suffered that catastrophe? There was no cry before we give them help, they have got to go get a job. Everybody was there and poured in help, as they should, the American way.

Where was your amendment down in Florida when the hurricanes hit down there? Nobody said, make them work before we help them.

Where were you last month when the hurricanes hit in Arkansas and then south Georgia, when the President went down and declared a disaster area? We helped those people.

My friend, let me remind you of something. I am going to tell you this story. It's a story about some folks that went down the road to Jericho, and this gentleman fell among thieves. He had disaster. He was hurting, and he was pained. Somebody walked by him and said nothing and did nothing. Another person walked by him and did nothing.

Your amendment is worse. You want to kick them and say get up and get a job. But that third man had compassion on him, and in his hour of need, picked him up, put him on his horse, took him to an inn and paid him to take care of him and house him.

That is what this amendment is doing. It is a Good Samaritan amendment. Yours is the Ugly American amendment, and it needs to be defeated.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN).

□ 1630

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I thank the Members who have spoken before me, and I am greatly concerned about the amendment. I am concerned because I, too, understand what happened with 9/11. It was one of the great disasters of our time, and yet I know of no amendments comparable to this one.

My friend from Texas and I in committee engaged in somewhat of a Q and A, so I believe it appropriate and fair that he and I do a similar thing at this time. So to my friend from Texas I ask, what amendment would you have imposed on the more than $15 billion that the families received after 9/11? Which, by the way, I think was appropriate.

I ask my friend to respond, and I yield him such time as he may need within my 2 minutes to do so.

Mr. HENSARLING. Well, to help answer the question of the gentleman from Georgia, I wasn't in Congress, so therefore I had no amendment to offer.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Because my time is limited, let me just ask, if you would, what would you have done, is my question.

Mr. HENSARLING. Well, as typical, what I would try to do is offer offsets. And I believe that any income-based program of cash assistance or other welfare assistance ought to be tied to a self-sufficiency requirement.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. I have limited time. Would you have required work for the families of 9/11?

Mr. HENSARLING. Again, I believe that anybody who is receiving income-based assistance from the Federal Government ultimately ought to be on the road to self-sufficiency. As I understand it, some of that—

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. I thank the gentleman.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to how much time we have left on this amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlewoman from California has 3 minutes remaining; the gentleman from Texas has 1 minute remaining.

Ms. WATERS. I would like to yield 1 additional minute to Representative CLEAVER.

Mr. CLEAVER. The point I was trying to make earlier was that, actually, the fact that this is not a welfare reform bill, this is about aiding people in a distressed area.

If we are talking about TANF recipients, it is important to understand that in the State of Louisiana, 5,000 TANF recipients are adults, and the bulk of them are children. In Mississippi, 8 percent of them are adults, and the rest of the 32,270 are children. And I think that we have gone awry converting a bill aimed at providing relief for people who are hurting down in the deepest parts of who they are and trying to impose a welfare rights bill on them when we have not done it in any other crisis in the history of this Republic. It is not the right thing to do to say to people that, in the midst of your struggle, in the midst of you trying to rebuild your home, rekindle your belief in the Nation, that we are going to now require that you volunteer.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, in closing on this opposition, I would simply like to say, I think that my colleagues have made a wonderful case for why we should not support this amendment.

And let me just say that this amendment is not in the spirit of the work that has been done on this bill. We have had wonderful cooperation with Ranking Member BACHUS, Ranking Member of the subcommittee BIGGERT, and Mr. NEUGEBAUER, who all attended the hearing and participated in the tours. And I think that everybody is bending over backwards to do the right thing.

We are not trying to penalize people, we are not trying to accuse people of trying to get something for nothing, we are not trying to treat people differently than we treat others. And I think this has been demonstrated throughout our work.

So the case that has been made here and the comparisons that have been made are legitimate. And I think you can see very clearly that there is some very deep feelings about any attempt to treat people differently, to try and penalize them in any unfair way, to try and put another welfare reform bill on top of the welfare reform bill that we already have that people are involved in. And I think that my colleagues in this Congress, too, will understand that.

I suppose I could always say to the gentleman, in the interest of us working together, perhaps you should withdraw the amendment, but that is not mine to say. Mine simply is to say that I am opposed to the amendment. I think it is disruptive, I think that it is polarizing, and I think it is not the kind of amendment we would like to see on a bill where we have had such tremendous cooperation.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, again, this is a very, very simple amendment. I have no idea what is so cruel and unusual about people having the opportunity to become self-reliant, to earn paychecks instead of welfare checks.

The gentleman from Georgia, who spoke with great stridency, I don't question his sincerity; I do question a number of his policies. I have no doubt that the gentleman has voted against tax relief to help create 7½ million jobs turning welfare checks to paychecks.

So the gentleman has different ways of trying to help people. I look at the statistics. What has helped people? What has brought down child poverty rates? What has helped single mothers find self-sufficiency?

So I don't understand, after 18 months, after $100 billion of taxpayer money, why it is so bad to say people ought to be on the road to self-sufficiency.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING).

The question was taken; and the Chairman announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MRS. BIGGERT

The CHAIRMAN. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in part B of House Report 110–53.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 4 offered by Mrs. BIGGERT:

In section 203(a), strike ''(including any uninhabitable unit and any unit previously approved for demolition)'' and insert ''that was occupied as of August 25, 2005,''.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 254, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) and a Member opposed each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, I rise to introduce an amendment that I think fixes a provision of the bill that mistakenly includes replacements for 2,000 units in New Orleans, even though these units were not occupied and, in fact, were condemned and scheduled for demolition prior to Katrina.

Let's just do the math. Before Katrina, there were 5,156 public housing units that were occupied in New Orleans. We don't know how many of those 5,156 residents will want to return. We have asked HUD to find them and conduct a survey to ask that question. In the meantime, this bill authorizes replacements not only for the 5,156 units that were occupied by Katrina, it throws in another 2,000 units that were unoccupied, condemned, and scheduled for demolition. I see no point to that.

We don't know how many of the residents will return. Why then would we want to replace not only the 5,156 units they occupied, but an additional 2,000 units that nobody lived in even both before Katrina?

My amendment will permit one-for-one replacement of the units that were occupied by public housing residents at the time of the 2005 storms.

According to CBO estimates, this amendment would reduce the spending authorized in this bill by $270 million, which is the cost of replacing the 2,000 public housing units that nobody lived in before the 2005 storms hit.

Mr. Chairman, I urge support of the amendment, and reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the gentlewoman's amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady from California is recognized for 10 minutes.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

First let me thank Mrs. BIGGERT for all the work that she has done in helping us to get this bill to the floor, and the time that she has taken to pay attention to this issue. And I certainly respect her thinking on this issue and the fact that she was there, she went through the units, she saw them. But I must respectfully disagree.

I must disagree because not only did we have 18,000 individuals on the waiting lists, waiting for public housing units; yes, these units were boarded up, these units were boarded up, and there had been a promise that there would be redevelopment that had not taken place. Not only do you have 18,000 on the waiting list, do you realize that many of the people that have been displaced because of Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita are folks who were working, who had jobs? They lost their homes, they lost their jobs. They are living in temporary situations. They are in Houston, they are in Atlanta, they are in cities in Florida. They are all over. They now may qualify for public housing based on the fact that they have lost on their jobs. They want to return, they want to come back, and they should have an opportunity to apply for and receive public housing units that should be available to them.

So let me just say that we should have one-for-one replacement because it is needed. People are standing in line. They were standing in line before Katrina; they will be standing in line after Katrina. And, Mrs. BIGGERT, if you remember, the mayor of the city of New Orleans said he would love to contract for 1,000 units to have places for people who want to come back to New Orleans to work.

We are unleashing the possibilities for infrastructure rebuilding, with

some of the match requirements having been modified in the way that we have done them. They want to get started with the building, And people need places to live. So he would like to have units for people to come back and work in. When these units are replaced, we have enough people who want to live in them. And so it is not a fair way to determine how many units get replaced by simply saying only those that were occupied prior to Katrina, because that waiting list is a reminder to all of us of how badly those units are needed.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to my colleague from Texas.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. I thank the gentlewoman very much.

Mr. Chairman, one of the things that we saw down there was we saw some housing units and some of the public housing that had been refurbished and was ready to rent. But what we did see in those housing projects was a lot of vacant units. So one of the things that is going on right now, the dynamics as we are talking about earlier about getting something going there, is a couple of organizations have come in, and they have some master—planned communities to go back and replace some of this housing.

You almost cannot describe on this House floor, we really need pictures to be able to articulate the condition of some of this housing. It is throwing good money after bad to go back and bring very many of these units back because, one, they have been sitting for 18 months just the way they were the night that the folks that left those units left them. They have been under water. They have been vandalized.

So one of the things that we need to do is we need to provide a certain amount of housing that meets the current demand, see how many people actually want to come back to New Orleans, come back to those neighborhoods. I would submit to you that if you want folks to come back, and I think that is the goal of the people of New Orleans, they want people to come back to the community, if you want them to come back, don't ask them to come back to those units that were in terrible condition before the hurricane and would cost a lot of money to restore. We should take those new dollars and provide a new opportunity for the people in New Orleans, and not mandate things that would cause the resources to be diverted to spending a lot of money.

And I would tell you, in some cases, as the gentlewoman Ms. WATERS mentioned, I have been a home builder and a land developer, I know what the cost of restoration is, and many times the cost of restoration of units exceeds the cost of creating those new units.

But putting those arguments aside, just going back and recreating what was already a bad thing, as Ranking Member BACHUS said before, in some of these where we had a high concentration of poor people is not good policy.

So the Biggert amendment makes sense. Let's let the demand drive it. As there is demand to fix up these units. If the new units are not ready, there are ways to meet those market demands.

□ 1645

But if you go back and ask them to come up with a number, and let's say that is two or 3,000 units or whatever that number is, and those units sit vacant because people don't want to go back to those neighborhoods, we have defeated the purpose and, unfortunately, not been good stewards of the American taxpayers' money. So I would urge Members to support the Biggert amendment.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT) 3 minutes.

Mr. WATT. Mr. Chairman, I have been listening with some interest to the comments on this amendment, and I think there would be substantially more credibility for the people who are advancing it if there had actually been some units constructed or even started in the 17 or 18 months since Hurricane Katrina occurred.

It is somewhat amazing to me how we have fought for so many years to do community development, and all of a sudden HUD and our colleagues here want to do community development, but they want to do it in this distress atmosphere where there is no housing, even for people to move back into who would participate and do work on the units.

Here is what has happened. The hospitals that had damage to the first floors went back in and put patients on the second, third and fourth floors. The housing, the public housing that had damage to the first floors, the Public Housing Agency, which, by the way, is in receivership under HUD, not an independent local housing authority, but in receivership, being operated by HUD, took the position that it would be unsafe to put public housing tenants back in those units by restoring second, third, fourth floors of the housing units.

Now, I can't figure out how it is safe to put medical patients on the second, third and fourth floors of hospitals where you have gone in and basically done some remedial stuff on the first floors of the hospitals, and yet it is unsafe to put people who have no housing to return to on the second, third, fourth floors, and restore the first floors of the public housing.

This is not an argument against doing longer-term community revitalization. That needs to happen, and we are supportive of that. But in this distress situation, there needs to be, first, restoration of the housing that was there so that people can move back in and get back into their communities and stop being scattered all over the country. And that should be the highest priority that we are pursuing, and that is what the bill does.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Chairman and Members, I would like to reiterate something that the gentleman from North Carolina just said, and that is the fact that we are not trying to stop development. As a matter of fact, what we are doing is restoring units so that people can have some place to return. Their lives are in a temporary state of existence. Our residents that we talked to said they would be happy to work with the housing authority and HUD to talk about the future development. So I just wanted to make that clear.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. WATERS. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. I just want to clarify about using the multi-stories. Most of the housing that we saw, and I am not going to say all of it, we didn't see all of the housing, but most of the housing is one- and two-story. There may have been some three-story. And some of those are walkups; in other words, the second story is a part of the first part of the unit; in other words, it is a two-story unit. So the argument that you are dealing with a high rise where there is floor 3 up to 10 is usable, in these particular housing units that we saw there was not multistory housing.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady from Illinois has 5½ minutes remaining, and the gentlewoman from California has 3 minutes remaining.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, I am glad that Mr. NEUGEBAUER clarified that. The buildings, we went into those buildings and we climbed up to the second floor and it was just as bad as the first floor and there were no other floors.

One thing about New Orleans housing is at least it was not the high rises like we saw originally in Chicago, that a whole precinct would be public housing. And those have been done away with.

But let me just say that we want people to come back, and we want them to have the housing. And there are some of the units that have been fixed up. And what has happened is there is nobody there, and the police have to come because they are broken into and they are vandalized. And we need more people there.

But these units, we need to know how many people are going to come back originally. We have got to start the process someplace, and we don't seem to be able to do that. If we have 5,156 residents that were promised that they could come back, we should provide that. And it is a one-on-one. But for the 2,000, let's get those first people back and get them back by August so that they could have their kids go to school. The housing is not great, but let's get them back to do that. But to have 2,000 other units that are built

that we really would rather get the first ones going, we have got the money for it. And I think now we are talking about 18,000 people that are on the waiting list.

First of all, let's just say that there are people that have moved to other States. They have jobs. They have a life. The survey goes out, and it is going to be completed by HUD and we will know. We don't know how many people are on the waiting list. Nobody has made an attempt to figure out if they are people that are waiting or they have gone someplace else.

So I would say that this is just to get it going. And to undertake 5,165 units is going to take awhile. Obviously, to build a whole multi-use facility is going to take a lot more time. But there are plans to do it. So we can do it both, but let's get it going.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, who has the right to close?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlewoman from California has the right to close.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Well, in that case, since I am our last speaker, I would ask the other side to use up their time.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, with that, again, before we make all these decisions, we really have to know how many people are going to return. If we have the 5,100-some units and all the people that have been living in those units don't return, then there will be a time that they can open up the section 8 housing and have people off the waiting list who qualify. If they still qualify, if they come back.

But what this bill is doing is a one-on-one replacement, and that is what it says in this bill, is to replace the one-on-one replacement for those units that we were talking about, whether it is 5,000 or it is 7,000. And I say let's use the dollars that we have to start with the people that were displaced from there. They have the public housing, they have the vouchers, and let's not wait any longer.

Mr. Chairman, I yield to Mr. BACHUS for the remaining time.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Chairman, in my earlier statement I said that the one-for-one replacement is not the best way to rebuild public housing in New Orleans. In fact, it is not only not the best way, it is the wrong way, because what we are doing here is we are saying before we replace these units, before we tear them down and build a community like Centennial, or East Lake, we are going to renovate the existing structures with taxpayers' money. What that does, oh, yes, it may get people back, but it gets them back into the same failed system.

They are out there. They have homes now. Let's continue to give them vouchers, let them stay, and then when we build a community that is safe, that they can be proud of, that is mixed-use, then we bring them back.

I mentioned East Lake. And East Lake was, as I said earlier, was the highest crime area in the entire State of Georgia. Today it is the 11th safest precinct out of 56.

One thing I didn't tell you about East Lake, the school in East Lake, prior to this development, only 31 percent of the children in that school were performing up to the State standardized testing. Today, two-thirds are, and they say within 2 years they will be at three-fourths. That is as good as any school in just about any school in Atlanta.

The director of the East Lake Community Foundation, Carol Naughton, said, while East Lake did not provide one-to-one replacement, it actually ends up serving more low-income families than are served under the previous arrangement. The occupancy rate at the old East Lake was 67 percent. Today it is 93 percent, and for subsidized homes it is 100 percent.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Chairman, I yield the remaining time to the gentleman from Massachusetts, Chairman FRANK.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois is absolutely irrelevant to whether or not people ought to be occupying existing units. That is not what is involved here.

First of all, let me say the gentleman from Alabama and others said they have these plans to build these great new places. Who is stopping them? The hurricane was in September of 2005. It is now March of 2007. Have they started this? Have I stopped them? Have the tenants stopped them? Has the gentlewoman from California stopped them? Nobody has stopped them.

And the New Orleans Housing Authority, by the way, is HUD in drag. So nobody here has prevented them.

Here is what we are saying. What is amended is this: if you plan to tear down units that are now habitable, you cannot do that until you have met with the tenants, talked about this and replaced them.

This is an issue not about whether you live in the existing units. This isn't about rehabbing existing units. This is as to what is the obligation to replace the units.

The fact is that, according to HUD's own figures, more than half of the rental units in New Orleans were destroyed by the hurricane. People talk about job problems. That is because they have nowhere to live.

The gentlewoman's amendment would reduce by 2,000 the number of units they would be obligated to build before tearing down things that now exist. And you know, it is very nice. We have been doing this for years. We have promised the poor people all kinds of things, and those promises don't always materialize.

All we are saying is do whatever destruction you want after you have found places to live. And let me make it clear: we are talking about people who don't live here, who live in Texas and elsewhere and they want to come back. And it is not simply former residents of public housing. There were a lot of people who were displaced from New Orleans. We don't think we are in danger of running out of people who want to come back.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, I just want to be clear that the reason the units haven't been replaced there is because, as the gentleman knows, there has been some historical preservation issues.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. That is simply not the case. Here is the problem with the gentleman's view. They have this view that you can only build new units for poor people after you have torn down what they had. No one has enjoined them from building new units, except the budget that the people on the other side have voted for. We have got to get this clear. Nobody has prevented, there have been no plans by HUD, also known as the Housing Authority of New Orleans, to build new units. Nobody has stopped them except, yes, people have said you can't tear down what we have as the pre-condition for building. But if HUD had wanted to go forward and build, no one would have prevented that. The wonderful housing that the gentleman from Alabama talked about, the mixed-use housing, what has stopped them from building it? I will tell what you has stopped them from building it, the budgets that have been voted for by my friends on the other side that didn't have any money for new housing construction.

□ 1700

I will tell you what we are going to do. We are going to pass the GSE bill that is going to have the housing affordability fund so they can build these things.

So we are simply saying do not destruct before you replace and do the poor people the favor of tearing down the bad housing they live in so they have nothing left at all.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT).

The question was taken; and the Chairman announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois will be postponed.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. AL GREEN OF TEXAS

The Acting CHAIRMAN (Mr. BLUMENAUER). It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in part B of House Report 110–53.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 5 offered by Mr. AL GREEN of Texas:

At the end of the bill, add the following new title:

TITLE IX—PROTECTION OF HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING FEMA HOUSING ASSISTANCE

SEC. 901. EXTENSION OF FEMA HOUSING ASSISTANCE.

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to provide until December 31, 2007, temporary housing assistance, including financial and direct assistance, under section 408(c)(1) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174(c)(1)) to individuals and households eligible to receive such assistance as a result of Hurricane Katrina, Rita, or Wilma, and to the extent that amounts for such purpose are made available, such assistance shall be so extended.

SEC. 902. VOUCHER ASSISTANCE FOR HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING FEMA RENTAL ASSISTANCE AND HOUSEHOLDS RESIDING IN FEMA TRAILERS.

(a) TRANSFER OF FEMA RENTAL ASSISTANCE TO SECTION 8 VOUCHER PROGRAM.—There are authorized to be appropriated, for tenant-based rental assistance under section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)), such sums as may be necessary to provide vouchers for such assistance for each individual and household that is eligible for such voucher assistance and received financial assistance for temporary housing under section 408(c)(1) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174(c)(1)) as a result of Hurricane Katrina, Rita, or Wilma, for the period beginning upon termination of such temporary housing assistance and continuing through such period that such individual or household remains eligible for such voucher assistance. Such voucher assistance shall be administered by the public housing agency having jurisdiction of the area in which such assisted individual or household resides as of such termination date.

(b) VOUCHER ASSISTANCE FOR HOUSEHOLDS RESIDING IN FEMA TRAILERS.—

(1) OFFER.—The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall offer, to each individual and household who, as of the date of the enactment of this Act, receives direct assistance for temporary housing under section 408(c)(2) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174(c)(2)) as a result of Hurricane Katrina, Rita, or Wilma and is eligible for tenant-based rental assistance under section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)), a voucher for such rental assistance, subject to the availability of amounts for such assistance made available in advance in appropriation Acts.

(2) PROVISION OF ASSISTANCE.—There are authorized to be appropriated, for tenant-based rental assistance under section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)), such sums as may be necessary to provide vouchers for such assistance for each individual and household that, pursuant to an offer of such assistance under paragraph (1) requests such assistance, for the period beginning upon occupancy of the individual or household in a dwelling unit acquired for rental with such assistance and continuing through such period that such individual or household remains eligible for such voucher assistance.

(c) TEMPORARY VOUCHERS.—If at any time an assisted family for whom a voucher for rental housing assistance is provided pursuant to this section becomes ineligible for further such rental assistance—

(1) the public housing agency administering such voucher pursuant to this section may not provide rental assistance under such voucher for any other household;

(2) the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall recapture from such agency any remaining amounts for assistance attributable to such voucher and may not reobligate such amounts to any public housing agency; and

(3) such voucher shall not be taken into consideration for purposes of determining any future allocation of amounts for such tenant-based rental assistance for any public housing agency.

SEC. 903. REQUIREMENT TO ACCEPT VOUCHERS.

No owner (as such term is defined in section 8(f) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(f)) of any dwelling unit for which, at any time, rental payments for the individual or household residing in the unit were made, in whole or in part, using financial assistance for temporary housing provided under section. 408(c)(1) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5174(c)(1)) as a result of Hurricane Katrina, Rita, or Wilma, may refuse to lease such dwelling unit to a family on whose behalf tenant-based rental assistance is made available under section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)), a proximate cause of which is the status of such family as a holder of such voucher.

AMENDMENT NO. 5, AS MODIFIED, OFFERED BY MR. AL GREEN OF TEXAS

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, because I have a modified amendment at the desk, I ask unanimous consent that amendment No. 5 be modified.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will report the modification.

The Clerk read as follows:

Modification to amendment No. 5 offered by Mr. AL GREEN of Texas:

The amendment, as modified, is as follows:

At the end of the bill, add the following new title:

TITLE IX —PROTECTION OF HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING FEMA HOUSING ASSISTANCE

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(2) PROVISION OF ASSISTANCE.—There are authorized to be appropriated, for tenant-based rental assistance under section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)), such sums as may be necessary to provide vouchers for such assistance for each individual and household that, pursuant to an offer of such assistance under paragraph (1) requests such assistance, for the period beginning upon occupancy of the individual or household in a dwelling unit acquired for rental with such assistance and continuing through such period that such individual or household remains eligible for such voucher assistance.

(c) TEMPORARY VOUCHERS.—If at any time an assisted family for whom a voucher for rental housing assistance is provided pursuant to this section becomes ineligible for further such rental assistance—

(1) the public housing agency administering such voucher pursuant to this section may not provide rental assistance under such voucher for any other household;

(2) the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development shall recapture from such agency any remaining amounts for assistance attributable to such voucher and may not reobligate such amounts to any public housing agency; and

(3) such voucher shall not be taken into consideration for purposes of determining any future allocation of amounts for such tenant-based rental assistance for any public housing agency.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas (during the reading). Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the modified amendment be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Without objection, the amendment is modified.

There was no objection.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to House Resolution 254, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) and a Member opposed each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, please permit me to take just a moment to thank the chairperson of the Financial Services Committee, Mr. FRANK. I am so honored to have the opportunity to serve under his leadership. There are many persons who are great managers. Great managers are concerned about doing things right, but I want you to know that our leader is concerned about doing the right thing, and I am honored that he is the chairperson of our committee.

I also want to thank the subcommittee chairperson Chairwoman WATERS. She has gone to Louisiana on many occasions, and Mississippi. She has held one hearing there where she was Chair, and she attended another hearing wherein she was a ranking member. And in attending these hearings, she did more than sit in a physical location and listen to people talk. She actually went to the housing complexes. She actually talked to persons who were living in the apartments, the units, and in so doing, she gained a greater understanding of what is actually taking place in the lives of the people who have been displaced. So I thank her for all that she has done.

I also thank the Members of the minority who attended. I am greatly appreciative that they were there and showed great interest in what was happening to the people from Louisiana who have moved to other locations as well as those who are trying to move back.

And finally I thank the staff. The staff has done an outstanding job in helping us to put this legislation together. They are to be commended. We do a lot of things, but we do most of them because we have good staff, and I thank them.

Mr. Chairman, Hurricane Katrina, one of the greatest natural disasters of our time, has caused us to confront one of the greatest domestic issues of our time. And the question that we have to confront is how does the richest country in the world treat the poorest victims of one of the world's greatest disasters?

The richest country in the world, the country where 1 out of every 110 persons is a millionaire, how does it treat persons who are among the least, the last, and the lost who have suffered as a result of a natural disaster? With all due respect given to my chairman, I don't want to get into the war, but a country wherein $177 million is being spent not per year, not per month, not per week, but per day on the war, how does this country, the richest in the world, treat the least, the last, and the lost when they have suffered a natural disaster?

I am proud to say that our response to Hurricane Katrina has taught me that in times of disaster, Americans of goodwill want to see that no American, to borrow a cliche, is left behind. Communities across the length and breadth of this country opened their arms, their homes, their hearts to the Katrina survivors. From financial services institutions to nonprofits, from apartment owners to homeowners, we answered the clarion call for help, understanding in a sacred sense that but for the grace of God there go I.

However, I also understand and I have learned in a secular sense that HUD, not FEMA, is best suited to meet the mid- to long-term needs of disaster victims. In fact, a White House report from February of 2006, styled ''Lessons Learned'' indicates that HUD was mistakenly not engaged in the housing response until late in the effort. It also indicates that HUD has expertise in providing the long-term housing needs that these victims so desperately need. It further indicates and recommends that HUD be designated the lead Federal agency for providing temporary housing.

FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, by definition should not, should not manage long-term housing needs. Today, more than 18 months after Katrina, more than 120,000 households are still receiving FEMA assistance. More than 37,000 households are still receiving FEMA rental assistance. It is past time, Mr. Chairman, to get the Federal Emergency Management Agency out of the Katrina long-term housing crisis, and it is time that we put the Housing and Urban Development program in charge.

Why is there a long-term Katrina housing crisis? Because the vast majority of all families receiving FEMA rental assistance have extremely low incomes and are disabled and/or elderly.

Why is there a long-term Katrina rental housing crisis? Because of the Katrina survivors receiving rental assistance, 7 in 10 households have annual incomes below $15,000 per year, because more than half of the monthly incomes are $750 or less, because more than 44 percent have health care problems that will impact their abilities to work.

How has FEMA responded to this housing crisis? By moving real people with real problems from one deadline to another deadline. The section 403 rental program alone speaks volumes. The deadline for section 403 moved from March 1, 2006, to March 30, 2006, to May 31, 2006, to June 30, 2006, to July 31, 2006, to August 30, 2006.

It is time to end the deadlines and extend a lifeline to only those who are eligible for HUD assistance.

This amendment, I believe my friends on the other side should really love this amendment because it provides assistance to the people that don't have a place to return home to, and I think that is what my friends are indicating we should do. This amendment extends section 408 rental housing assistance until the end of this year. Further, it would help the families who are eligible for section 8 rental vouchers to get section 8 rental vouchers. And as soon as a family becomes ineligible for section 8 rental vouchers, then the family would cease to get the vouchers, and the vouchers would cease to exist.

This amendment also allows persons living in FEMA trailers who are eligible to receive section 8 vouchers to receive section 8 rental vouchers. Again, they must be eligible to receive the vouchers to, in fact, acquire the section 8 vouchers.

This amendment is supported by over 50 not-for-profits and other agencies. It has a zero direct impact on spending. It has a budget score of zero. And I think it is time for us to end the deadline, extend the timeline, and extend long-term rental assistance only to those persons who are eligible to receive it.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentlewoman from Illinois is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, this amendment would again extend FEMA temporary financial assistance through the end of December and then provide those section 8 vouchers to FEMA-assisted families when FEMA assistance expires, and that is exactly what the gentleman was talking about, but I think that the amendment is unnecessary.

The President currently has the authority to extend the length of this temporary assistance, as he has already done before. This assistance was supposed to expire at the end of 18 months, but the President extended it through August of 2007 to allow FEMA ample time, I think, to work with the families and help them secure permanent housing. This means that this assistance will have lasted a full 2 years since Katrina.

Since the hurricanes, FEMA has provided billions of dollars in assistance directly to individuals and households to support their recovery, including flood insurance payouts, direct payments for rental assistance, payments for home repairs and lost property. But FEMA assistance was supposed to be temporary to give families that were affected by the devastation time to get back on their feet. But today, as was said, 35,000 families are still living in FEMA trailers. Our efforts should be focused on moving these families to permanent housing, including homeownership, instead of keeping them in limbo.

It really concerns me that we move from FEMA and then turn it into section 8 housing. Deadlines such as the August 2007 deadline have encouraged families to make decisions about their future rather than continuing the expectation that the Federal Government will provide for them. In fact, every time FEMA has had a deadline and has enforced it, we have seen more people move further on the road to recovery and self-sufficiency. When FEMA moved people out of the hotels and motels, people said thousands would be

homeless. In fact, nationwide less than 100 people were in the shelters as a result, and most of them for only 3 days. I understand the same held true for the cruise ships. When the cruise ships' assistance ended, nobody ended up in a shelter.

So we need to encourage the President to have the flexibility he needs to do this right, and that means leaving it to the administration to determine when and for how long to extend the housing aid through FEMA.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1715

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds.

Mr. Chairman, apparently it is understood, I suppose, that moving is not a pleasant thing, and in contemplation of moving, many persons become distraught. I personally don't like moving, and I suspect that many of my friends on the other side do not.

My point is it creates a lot of stress in the lives of people to move from deadline to deadline. This amendment extends a lifeline and gives them the time to adjust their lives.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Texas.

Mr. Chairman, let me, first of all, thank the chairman of the full committee Mr. FRANK, and the chairwoman of the subcommittee Ms. WATERS, and then my colleague from Texas Mr. GREEN, who eloquently laid out for us the reason for this particular amendment.

Might I say, having not listened to all of his statement, I know that one of the elements of his offering of this amendment is firsthand personal experience, because I walked with him through the cots of the Reliance Center on a regular basis, over and over again. I was on the telephone as the buses started leaving the convention center and leaving the Superdome coming into Houston in the middle of the night.

We have seen the actual results of massive, long-term evacuation. It is well-known that FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security were not prepared for long-term evacuation.

This is an amendment that extends the deadline to December 31, 2007, for several reasons. First of all, might I say that it might have been the executive branch that extended it, but it really was the Director of FEMA being pounded upon, and I must say Director Paulison, the newer Director of FEMA, is very sensitive and concerned about this issue. He is putting his nose to the grindstone, along with, of course, the White House that has said to him you can do that. But each time these deadlines come, they are disruptive.

I went to a set of apartments, to my good friends on the other side of the aisle, in apartments where evacuees were holding eviction notices because they are coming up against each time a set of deadlines with nobody seeming to be able to respond. The reason why the thousands of people did not go out on the street is because the good citizens of Houston, Salt Lake City, Atlanta or Los Angeles, the nonprofits stood up to the case. In Houston today, we have people meeting every week, nonprofits, led by the United Way, trying to prepare for the inevitable, which is people out on the street.

This amendment gives several things an opportunity to happen. One, first of all, let me celebrate this bill because it gives section 8 vouchers over and beyond the ones that should be assigned to the city of Houston for Houstonians. That has been a conflict. ''I need a section 8 voucher. I live in Houston. Why are you overlooking me?''

Now we have a pathway so that we recognize that we have failed in our long-term evacuation. My friends, accept it. You have done a horrible job. This is a long-term evacuation that we had no solutions to.

Particularly I want to thank the author of this amendment and this bill, because now you also give an opportunity for us to go back into public housing. Just using Houston as an example, the predominant number of those who came to Houston were out of the city center there, the civic center, and, of course, the Superdome. They were the people displaced out of the housing projects. Isn't it ridiculous that they want to go back to their city and that we are blocking them from getting into their housing projects?

So these section 8 vouchers that will come about in this bill will be helpful while they are trying to get home. This extension that Mr. GREEN is offering will help them while they are trying to get home.

You go to these individuals. Some of them have made a commitment to live in Houston. I guess they made a commitment to live in Atlanta, maybe in New York. But many of them you talk to say, I just want to get home. But they are being blocked by this administration in not being able to get in their public housing, and they are coming up against one deadline after another.

You can't get yourself together. We have the elderly and disabled. We don't know if they will ever be able to go back, but they certainly need these resources being offered by Mr. GREEN in this amendment.

I enthusiastically support this concept of an extension to December 31, 2007, Mr. Chairman, and I support the voucher projects of this bill. I ask my colleagues to vote for this bill.

When FEMA's temporary housing programs expire on August 31, 2007, over 120,000 families housed across the country through FEMA-funded trailers, mobile homes and rental assistance could be displaced a second time.

Housing assistance is critical for the many low-income, elderly, and disabled evacuees displaced by Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma. An estimated 35,000 families currently receive Section 408 rental assistance from FEMA; the vast majority of these families reside in Houston. The average income of surviving families now in subsidized Houston apartments was less than $20,000 in Louisiana. While more than 60 percent of families were employed before Katrina, less than 20 percent are currently employed.

Families continue to face numerous challenges while rebuilding their lives in new communities, including finding affordable housing, health care, child care, and employment. The scarcity of housing in the Gulf Coast disproportionately hurts lower-income households, making it difficult for evacuees to find affordable housing and reducing the likelihood of their return home. Of the units destroyed or damaged by the hurricanes, 71 percent were affordable to low-income families and 30 percent were affordable to very low-income families.

This amendment would extend FEMA housing assistance until December 31, 2007, and then transfer income-eligible households to HUD's tenant-based rental assistance program when FEMA assistance ends, so that displaced families will have a place to stay while they wait for housing in the Gulf Coast to be rebuilt. Tenant-based vouchers would also be available to households currently living in FEMA trailers and mobile homes. This is important because conditions in many trailers are deteriorating and deadlines in many local communities for trailers and mobile homes are rapidly approaching. This amendment puts into law the deadline that I have worked on through negotiations and letters to FEMA.

The vouchers in this amendment would be ''temporary'' in the sense that they would only be available through the duration of the households' eligibility. Finally, this amendment would require property owners currently receiving rental assistance for displaced households to accept Section 8 vouchers for displaced households. HUD's role in meeting the longer-term housing needs of people displaced by disasters is supported by many members of Congress, housing advocates, and the Bush Administration. Nothing in this amendment would deny Houstonians their right to Section 8 vouchers.

I urge you to vote ''yes'' for the Green amendment so that we can provide displaced families with the assurance and stability they need to continue their recovery.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER).

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman.

Mr. Chairman, I think we are all working in the same direction here. We are all trying to figure out what is the best avenue to restore life for the people that were affected by this hurricane, and I think what we are bringing to this floor today in a meaningful debate is what is the best way to do that.

Some have talked about different methodologies about being able to restore these communities in the best way. But one of the things we have to have in our country in almost every life is structure.

April 15 is upon us, and that is the day our income tax is due. It is a deadline. What we have to say to the people that were affected by this is that the temporary disaster piece of this program is coming to an end. It is time now to make some permanent decisions, and we have been talking about what some of those permanent options are.

There is housing available in New Orleans, but there is housing available in some of the communities that these people are residing in. What we do is we keep pushing forward, keep pushing forward, families finally having to decide where do we go from here? It is time for many of those families to move on, and, unfortunately, we keep using Katrina as a way to increase programs that ought to be debated in other committees and at other times. More vouchers, more vouchers. What we need to do is set a date certain.

Now, as the ranking member of the Housing Subcommittee mentioned, the President of the United States has, in fact, extended these benefits. But what we also heard is in those circumstances where we didn't extend some of the programs, that there was life after that.

Sometimes the toughest love that you can do for someone to get them moving on, to help them to move on from a traumatic situation is actually force them to move on and go to the next step. What I think the gentleman's amendment does is it does not cause the process to have a stopping point for the temporary disaster and where we begin to talk about it more permanent.

I agree with the gentleman that FEMA is not the agency to do housing. HUD is set up to do housing. We have been talking about there are things in this bill that will help HUD, help the housing authority to get the permanent housing piece moving forward. But the longer we prolong this disaster and call it a temporary relief, I believe the longer we do the families that we are really trying to help a disservice.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself 30 seconds.

My response is that this is only for persons who are eligible to receive the relief. This means that persons must be eligible for the section 8 vouchers to receive the vouchers. This is not for people who just happen to be in need of someplace to stay and may be making $30,000, $40,000, $50,000 to $60,000 a year. They must qualify.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the honorable gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT), the former Chair of the CBC.

Mr. WATT. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I am struck because I was here about 15 or 20 minutes ago debating the last amendment. We operate in a structure that requires us to deal with one amendment at a time, and when you deal with one amendment at a time, you kind of get segmented into these little places that you are. But the thing that is astonishing here in this opposition to this amendment is that if you look at it in the context of the last amendment and this amendment, I don't know what it is you all would have these people do for housing.

In the last amendment, you said we don't want to build or renovate or restore any public housing in New Orleans because we want to do community development in New Orleans, and that is going to take a long time, and it is counterproductive to restore public housing in New Orleans while we are doing this community development.

Then in the next amendment you say, well, we don't want to give people vouchers so they can in the meantime stay in Houston, Texas, or Charlotte, North Carolina, or California or anywhere else.

Then my colleague gets up and starts his comments by saying, well, we are all working toward the same objective.

I keep wondering what that objective is. Our objective is to house these people temporarily and long term. Then in the last amendment you cut off the notion that you would house them long term because you don't want to renovate public housing. In this amendment you are cutting off the notion that you will house them short term because you don't want to give them vouchers to have housing immediately.

So when and where are you planning to house these people? Now, there is, my colleague reminded me, a NASA facility in Houston. Maybe you would like for us to put them on a spaceship and send them out.

My friends, these are not welfare recipients. Even if you have these stereotypes about these people feasting at the trough, these are people who were displaced by a hurricane. Regardless of these images that you may have about welfare recipients, these are people, these are our United States citizens who were displaced by a natural disaster, and all we are trying to do is provide housing for them, both on an immediate basis and on a long-term basis.

They have had three or four cutoffs now where one day they are sitting in a hotel and they are told, your assistance is being cut off. Imagine what that does for family values and for the notion of stability.

Have a heart and let's pass this amendment so that we can provide some housing to these people.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS), the ranking member of the Financial Services Committee.

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Chairman, I would like to take this time during this amendment to publicly thank the chairman of the full committee, Mr. FRANK, for his graciousness during the markup and the hearings on this bill and for his willingness to give us real input into this bill.

There are 13 components of this legislation that we are not out here on the floor asking for an amendment to because the chairman consented to their inclusion. I believe that those matters which separate us are less than those that we agree on.

This was a major disaster. It is the largest natural disaster this country has faced by many times.

□ 1730

That we are struggling on some consensus on what we do going forward is predictable, and I will say in the defense of my colleagues, we are simply saying that we don't want some of the units replaced on a one-on-one basis. We know of 2,000 units that were either vacant or slated for demolition at the time of the hurricane. It is particularly those units that Mrs. BIGGERT has said in her amendment do not need to be replaced.

There are many displaced New Orleans residents who may choose not to come back. Others like the flexibility of the section 8 voucher. We have also not said that we want folks that are displaced off these vouchers. We are simply saying it should not be a permanent situation.

The gentleman from North Carolina mentioned the word ''housing.'' We do not see this as a housing issue. We see this as a quality-of-life issue. We do not want to recreate housing projects like the one in Atlanta where 70 percent——

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield, and I will yield the time back to you if necessary.

Mr. BACHUS. I am not opposing your amendment. I am not speaking in opposition to your amendment.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. I thank you.

Mr. BACHUS. What I am speaking about, and I think there is agreement on both sides of the aisle, that when you have a housing project where a large percentage, even a majority of the young men that grow up in that housing project end up in a State penitentiary, we need to do something different.

We don't need to delay. Whether it is by renovating a unit that 2 years from now is slated for demolition, we just don't think that is the wisest use of taxpayer money.

And I do see that to do that, we are going to have to have vouchers and continue people on section 8 if we are to do long-term solutions. I think the gentleman from North Carolina made a valid point when he said that. That is something that should not be rejected out of hand.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield 6½ minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK), the chairman of the Committee on Financial Services.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I appreciate the kind remarks of the gentleman from Alabama. He is right, we accepted a number of amendments, and there is a great deal that joins us together. But there are some differences,

and I think in the spirit of democracy, we should debate these differences.

In the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) and this amendment as we debate it, there seems to be this view, as my friend from North Carolina said, that these are people who need to be jolted out of this welfare way of life. The gentleman from Texas wanted to subject these people to a 20-hour work requirement where no work needed to be done.

Here we are objecting to these people staying on section 8 because we want, as my other friend from Texas said, we are going to have some tough love.

Let's remember who we are talking about. These are people who were working overwhelmingly. They were working at lousy jobs for low pay. These were people who were doing work in the service industry. They were living in not great circumstances, and their homes and their jobs were washed away. They were driven out of their homes to strange places. Some of those places have been very welcoming, and I was pleased to see the Kennedy family give the mayor of Houston a Profile in Courage Award for the generosity that he has shown in welcoming people. But that is who we are talking about.

People had said, well, we want to improve the quality of their life. Do Members think, Mr. Chairman, that poor people are so dumb that they are voluntarily living in worse places than would otherwise be available to them? They are not living in great circumstances, but they are the best they can find and afford. When you displace them from what they have without providing them alternatives, you are likely to make them worse off.

Now, I understand there is a problem that some people might not fully deserve what they get, but overwhelmingly here is what we are talking about: people who had jobs and homes in New Orleans and maybe some other parts of Louisiana whose homes and jobs were washed away. And they are now living in emergency conditions provided by FEMA, and they haven't yet been able to fix it.

People ask, Why don't they go back to New Orleans? Well, we have a chicken-and-an-egg problem. We have a problem where there are no jobs because there is no place for the people to live.

In Mississippi along the gulf, the Oreck vacuum cleaner company opened up a plant after the hurricane and then closed it because they couldn't get workers because there wasn't housing. We are trying to build housing.

Vouchers in New Orleans is the problem. According to HUD's own figures, more than half of the rental housing units in New Orleans were destroyed by the storm. How do you expect these people to go back?

Now we have a bill that I am very proud of. The gentlewoman from California has worked very hard on this. We got organized on January 30. A week later we had our first hearing. A month later we had our markup. We are now on the floor. This has been a very high priority for us, to try to break this cycle of no job and no housing and no way to get back and no way to live and no decent life. And, yes, we are trying to build housing and we hope that the housing brings jobs.

Will there be some problems? Yes. But I have to say, if we are going to err, can we not err on the side of people who are poor in many cases to begin with and whose hard jobs, and in some cases meager homes were destroyed, and they were driven out of those homes by a force of nature and they are living in Texas and they are living in Atlanta, and they are being told tough love. We don't think the quality of your life is good enough.

We don't think you are trying hard enough. Is that what Members think?

These are among the toughest people around that they are still integrated and they are still with their families given what they have been through, the physical and emotional horrors of that hurricane and the lack of any action afterwards. Can we not resolve together to say to these people, look, we are going to work to try to help rebuild New Orleans. Until then, we will assure you can live in these places.

These vouchers people will get are what we call disappearing vouchers. They are not permanent additions to the voucher stock. They are for the people who were displaced from New Orleans, and as the gentleman from Texas pointed out, as long as they are economically eligible.

I don't think they all want to stay there and live in these temporary quarters. As they do find alternative ways to live, the voucher will disappear. So that is what we are talking about: thousands of our fellow human beings who were subjected to physical terrors and emotional troubles far greater than most of us, fortunately for us, will ever have to go through. Their homes and their jobs were destroyed. Their children were uprooted from schools. They were driven away from where they used to live. And they have then been put under the tender mercies of FEMA. And as my friend from Texas said, every so often they were told, you know what, there hasn't been enough trauma in your life, the flood, the deaths, all that, that's not enough. Now we are going to threaten you with eviction. Now you won't know where you're going to live.

What we are saying is let's say to these remaining people, while we are trying to rebuild New Orleans, we give you assurance that you will be able to live in the circumstances in which you are now living as long as you meet the guidelines. I don't understand the opposition to that. I don't understand why that brings Members to say tough love, we are going to improve the quality of their life.

Let's let these people at least have what they now have: a home that was something they were able to put together after that great trauma. And the alternative is people say they shouldn't worry, the President will extend it.

What do you say to your 8-year-old and 12-year-old when they ask: Where am I going to school next year? Oh, don't worry, the President will extend it.

Frankly, there are a lot of people here who wouldn't feel a great comfort in that, let alone an 8-year-old.

We are dealing with totally innocent people, hardworking people whose lives were already tough, were destroyed by a hurricane and they were forced physically out of their homes. We are saying instead of them continuing to live under the fear that they may be evicted, that they may have no further support in terms of their basic living, that we as a compassionate Nation will continue to make sure that they at least have a place to live while everything else goes forward. I hope the House will accept the gentleman's amendment.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

What this really boils down to, I think, and the problems we are having in communication is what to do with the long-term disaster housing. We haven't faced something like this before.

We have the disaster vouchers. We have the section 8 vouchers, and how do we make this all work. I think we all care about what is happening to these families. It has been over 18 months. We are concerned. People need to get on with their lives.

I don't think we are really asking for anything different except that we think that this is unnecessary because the President has the flexibility now to do what we are talking about. I think we should leave it. We think we should leave it to the administration to determine when, whether, and for how long to extend the housing aid through FEMA.

I agree, most of the families and individuals in the FEMA-sponsored housing are living in travel trailers that are not suitable for long-term housing. Just think of a family living in a trailer for the long term. I think extending the assistance will prolong this unsuitable housing arrangement.

I think FEMA is working now to determine, with Federal and State partners, to address the potential for what is going to happen for long-term housing needs as a result of these hurricanes.

We are setting precedent here. Let's hope we never have something like this again. I think this is moving along.

It will increase the amount of this bill if these vouchers are made permanent, but maybe we need to sit down and really work out what are disaster vouchers, and we already are working on section 8 vouchers; and we have jumped ahead on some of these things. I know everybody is enthusiastic on

this committee and wants to do everything right now, but we have a whole consideration of section 8 vouchers. And to extend FEMA and then turn them into permanent vouchers, section 8 vouchers, and I know they have to be eligible, but we really need to sit down and determine and debate what are really the long-term ramifications of what is going on.

I think some of these things can be worked out later. We don't have to do everything at once. I think this already is a costly bill, and I think we should wait to determine some of these things.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS), the honorable subcommittee Chair.

Ms. WATERS. I would like to stand and give my strong support to this amendment, and I thank the gentleman from Texas for working on this amendment and strengthening this legislation.

I am tired of the headlines at the end of one of these periods of time when the temporary assistance has run out, the headlines that say all of those people out there who are living in temporary situations are going to have to get off, they will not be supported any more, that their assistance has run out, and then legislators go running to beat up on FEMA. And then FEMA, after a few days or so, will make another extension. Time out. It is time for us to help people get some kind of permanency to their existence. This amendment will do that.

This amendment will simply say for those people who are living in trailers and all of this temporary housing, some of it is really not fit to live in, in places where we are spending money with the temporary vouchers, will now be given the opportunity with the passage of this amendment and this legislation to begin to reorder their lives and to go ahead and come home and get jobs, jobs that are needed, not only by those families but the infrastructures that need to be rebuilt by those people who will be there to do these jobs. All of this can happen with this kind of permanent voucher.

I think it is important to note, it has been said here that these vouchers will be given only to those people who are eligible for them. When they are no longer eligible, they will cease to exist. I don't know how you can be any fairer than that.

So we are talking about moving from temporary status to permanent status. When you don't need it any more, it is gone.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON), who is also a part of the committee.

□ 1745

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Chairman, let me throw my whole-hearted support behind this amendment. I think it is a clear expression of the generosity, the common sense and the decency of our country, and I want to thank the gentleman from Texas for offering this amendment.

The fact is that until we see the people of the gulf coast as our people, as opposed to those people, we will not be the kind of America we need to be. We will be less than we ought to be.

So I just want to say that extending housing to people who need it, victims of a disaster, not a human failing but a disaster, a natural disaster, is the just, right thing to do, and we should not allow what was a natural disaster to be a political disaster.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the remainder of the time.

Mr. Chairman, many of the persons who will receive these vouchers are persons who will be working full time and living below the poverty line, persons who are what we call extremely low-income persons, making around $12,000 per year. Does someone argue that a person making $12,000 per year should not receive some assistance for housing? That is what we are talking about, persons working below the poverty line full time, family of two. You are making about $13,000 if you are going to reach poverty line, and these vouchers go away. They are not vouchers that are permanent. They are only there to help as needed, and once the need ceases to exist, the vouchers will cease to exist.

People are suffering. Moving from one deadline to another deadline causes a lot of stress in the lives of the persons who have these vouchers or who have these temporary living conditions, and their children are suffering. The children are in schools. At some point people want to know that they have stability, that their children can attend the same school all year long, that at Christmastime there is no threat that they will have to move from one place to another. At some point we have to give them the stability that they deserve.

Finally, people still cry. They have tears to well in their eyes when they talk about what happened to them. Why would we continue to compound what is already a distressful situation by adding additional stress to their lives by threatening them with eviction?

In closing, I mention only that we have the ability to do the right thing, or we can try to do something right. We can try to put a process in place. I say it is time for us to do the right thing, and in the process, I think we will be doing something the right way as well.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself the remaining time.

Again, I think we are talking about the same thing; it is just how we get there.

What we are saying is that right now FEMA has provided temporary assistance. When it has been needed to extend, it has been extended. If people finally have found housing, and they qualify for Section 8 vouchers, they will be able to get them, but let FEMA work to address the problem and the potential for long-term housing needs as a result of the hurricane.

I just do not think that this amendment is necessary because it has been taken care of by the administration.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN), as modified.

The question was taken; and the Acting Chairman announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Chairman, I demand a recorded vote.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, further proceedings on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIRMAN

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to clause 6 of rule XVIII, proceedings will now resume on those amendments on which further proceedings were postponed, in the following order:

Amendment No. 3 by Mr. HENSARLING of Texas.

Amendment No. 4 by Mrs. BIGGERT of Illinois.

Amendment No. 5, as modified, by Mr. AL GREEN of Texas.

The Chair will reduce to 5 minutes the time for any electronic vote after the first vote in this series.

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. HENSARLING

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the noes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIRMAN. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 162, noes 266, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 164]

AYES—162

Aderholt	Bonner	Cantor
Akin	Bono	Carter
Alexander	Boozman	Chabot
Bachmann	Boustany	Cole (OK)
Baker	Brady (TX)	Conaway
Barrett (SC)	Brown (SC)	Crenshaw
Bartlett (MD)	Buchanan	Cubin
Barton (TX)	Burgess	Cuellar
Bilbray	Burton (IN)	Culberson
Bilirakis	Buyer	Davis, David
Bishop (UT)	Calvert	Davis, Tom
Blackburn	Camp (MI)	Deal (GA)
Blunt	Campbell (CA)	Doolittle
Boehner	Cannon	Drake

Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
English (PA)
Everett
Fallin
Feeney
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fortuño
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hill
Hoekstra
Holden
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Jindal
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
Kingston
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kuhl (NY)
Lamborn
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Manzullo
Marchant
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
Melancon
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Paul
Pearce
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Poe
Price (GA)
Putnam
Radanovich
Rehberg
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland
Wicker
Wilson (SC)
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOES—266

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Bachus
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Biggert
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bordallo
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Butterfield
Capito
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Castle
Castor
Chandler
Christensen
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis (KY)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doyle
Edwards
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Ferguson
Filner
Frank (MA)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gillmor
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth
Higgins
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hobson
Hodes
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
King (NY)
Kirk
Klein (FL)
LaHood
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Latham
LaTourette
Lee
Levin
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McHugh
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Norton
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Platts
Pomeroy
Porter
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Rahall
Ramstad
Rangel
Regula
Reichert
Renzi
Reyes
Reynolds
Rodriguez
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (NJ)
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Weller
Wexler
Whitfield
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (OH)
Wolf
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—10

Coble
Davis, Jo Ann
Faleomavaega
Kanjorski
Kucinich
Larson (CT)
Mack
Meehan
Pence
Sessions

□ 1817

Messrs. FILNER, AL GREEN of Texas, SCOTT of Virginia, SERRANO, GRIJALVA and Ms. SOLIS, Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida and Ms. WOOLSEY changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Messrs. HOLDEN, SMITH of Texas, FOSSELLA, PICKERING, SALI and CHABOT changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MRS. BIGGERT

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIRMAN. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 198, noes 232, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 165]

AYES—198

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachmann
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Cooper
Crenshaw
Cubin
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Emerson
English (PA)
Everett
Fallin
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fortuño
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Jindal
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCollum (MN)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Paul
Pearce
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Porter
Price (GA)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shays
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NOES—232

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bordallo
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Castor
Chandler
Christensen
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doyle
Edwards
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Klein (FL)

Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Norton
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pickering
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Rodriguez
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Wilson (OH)
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—8

Coble
Davis, Jo Ann
Faleomavaega
Kanjorski
Kucinich
Meehan
Pence
Sessions

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIRMAN

The Acting CHAIRMAN (during the vote). Members are advised that 2 minutes remain in this vote.

□ 1825

So the amendment was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

AMENDMENT NO. 5, AS MODIFIED, OFFERED BY MR. AL GREEN OF TEXAS

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The unfinished business is the demand for a recorded vote on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN), as modified, on which further proceedings were postponed and on which the ayes prevailed by voice vote.

The Clerk will redesignate the amendment.

The Clerk redesignated the amendment.

RECORDED VOTE

The Acting CHAIRMAN. A recorded vote has been demanded.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 246, noes 184, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 166]

AYES—246

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Altmire
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bilirakis
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Bordallo
Boren
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Buchanan
Burgess
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carney
Carson
Castor
Chandler
Christensen
Clarke
Clay
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers
Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly
Doyle
Edwards
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Emerson
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Frank (MA)
Gerlach
Giffords
Gilchrest
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth
Higgins
Hill
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Honda
Hooley
Hoyer
Inslee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Klein (FL)
Lampson
Langevin
Lantos
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lipinski
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Millender-McDonald
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mitchell
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Norton
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Peterson (MN)
Pickering
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Rodriguez
Ros-Lehtinen
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shays
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Spratt
Stark
Stupak
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Wilson (OH)
Woolsey
Wu
Wynn
Yarmuth
Young (AK)

NOES—184

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Bachmann
Bachus
Baker
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggert
Bilbray
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Brown (SC)
Brown-Waite, Ginny
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carter
Castle
Chabot
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Crenshaw
Cubin
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
English (PA)
Everett
Fallin
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fortuño
Fossella
Foxx
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gillmor
Gingrey
Gohmert
Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hulshof
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Jindal
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Latham
LaTourette
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo
Lucas
Lungren, Daniel E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
McMorris Rodgers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Moran (KS)
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Paul
Pearce
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (TX)
Souder
Stearns
Sullivan
Tancredo
Terry
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Whitfield
Wicker
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wolf
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—8

Coble
Davis, Jo Ann
Faleomavaega
Kanjorski
Kucinich
Meehan
Pence
Sessions

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIRMAN

The Acting CHAIRMAN (during the vote). Members are advised that there are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1835

Mr. FERGUSON changed his vote from ''aye'' to ''no.'' Mr. BURGESS changed his vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

So the amendment was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. KLEIN of Florida) having assumed the chair, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Acting Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1227) to assist in the provision of affordable housing to low-income families affected by Hurricane Katrina, had come to no resolution thereon.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PAGE BOARD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 88b–3, amended by section 2 of the House Page Board Revision Act of 2007, and the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair announces the Speaker's and minority leader's joint appointment of the following individuals to the House of Representatives Page Board for a term of 1 year: