

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, this Sunday marks the fourth anniversary of one of the most tragic days in our Nation's history: September 11th of 2001. We all know what happened following that tragic day. We came together, Democrats and Republicans, focusing on ways in which we could deal with the crisis of terrorist attacks on our soil.

We all know what has happened since that time. We just last week saw what our Chaplain very appropriately described as the worst natural disaster in our Nation's history, and I believe now it is absolutely essential that we do all we can to come together to make sure that we face that number-one priority of meeting the human need that is there.

This Congress is going to do everything we possibly can to ensure that our fellow Americans are comforted. Then, we need to focus on rebuilding.

Mr. Speaker, I have to tell my colleagues, in 1994, we had a tragic earthquake in Los Angeles, the Northridge earthquake, and we, at that time, saw the crumbling of I-10, the same interstate that runs into New Orleans. I have a piece of it right here from just over La Cienega Boulevard. When it collapsed, the most traversed freeway in the country, a quarter of a million cars a day go over it, they said it could take up to 2 years to rebuild that freeway. By incentivizing the contractor and reducing the regulatory burden, within 66 days, the Santa Monica Freeway was moving again.

We need to use this same can-do spirit to do exactly what Governor Haley Barbour said. He said, We will build the Gulf Coast bigger and better than it ever has been.

AMERICAN SPIRIT

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, as we return from our district work period, at the forefront of all of us is the catastrophe of Hurricane Katrina which literally turned our Nation upside down.

In my district on the north side of Atlanta, I am so proud of the work that has been done to provide relief support for those directly affected by the storm, the largest natural disaster in our Nation's history. Local towns are sending not just money and goods but personnel from fire and police departments. Our local Red Cross has activated shelters to help evacuees find relatives and get back on their feet. These are Americans helping Americans. The American can-do spirit is alive and well and strong.

But most disheartening has been the vicious, personal attacks against some who are trying their hardest to help folks recover, attacks that have even come from supposed leaders in our Nation. These statements and their tone are harmful to our Nation and our re-

covery. I call on all Americans, especially those in positions of influence, to work positively and constructively to solve our current challenge. Anything less does a disservice to all Americans and, ultimately, our viability as a free and a democratic society.

BUSH ADMINISTRATION BEGINS DAMAGE CONTROL SPIN OPERATION

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my support for the people affected and harmed by Hurricane Katrina and to pledge my total support for their aid and recovery. There is so much to be done to help the people on the ground, and there is so much to do in Washington to scrutinize and improve Federal policy regarding disaster prevention and response, and we must undertake that review and those efforts.

But I am also deeply frustrated and angry by the Bush administration's failed response to this tragedy and its failure to take responsibility for its own mistakes. According to the New York Times, the administration, led by Karl Rove, has begun a political damage control operation to blame the local officials in Louisiana, the Governor and the Mayor of the City of New Orleans, for the Federal Government's failures.

No one can undo the damage that has been done, and I wish we could. We should be putting our efforts into helping these people and repairing that damage. I wish the administration would have put as much energy into an early and timely response, an effective response to Hurricane Katrina, as the energy they are putting in now to developing a political strategy to undermine the local officials who have suffered so much in their own communities.

THANKING THE PEOPLE OF TEXAS FOR THEIR EFFORTS IN PROVIDING RELIEF TO THE VICTIMS OF HURRICANE KATRINA

(Mr. BURGESS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to take this minute and thank the people of my home State of Texas for opening their hearts and opening their State to their neighbors in Louisiana. Almost a quarter of a million residents from the State of Louisiana are now seeking shelter in the State of Texas.

In my district in north Texas, truly an unbelievable story has unfolded. The Dallas County Medical Society sent out a fax last week to 3,600 doctors and their membership; 800 members immediately sent back the response: Where do I show up and when?

That group put together a response for the hurricane victims that is abso-

lutely unprecedented in my experience in medicine. In my own district in north Texas, from Gainesville to Denton to Keller, to the City of Fort Worth, shelters have been set up, sometimes at a church, sometimes at a summer camp, sometimes at an old hospital, but these centers have provided the shelter and the comfort to the victims of this devastating hurricane. And hopefully, we will get them back on their way, get them the help they need and allow them to rebuild their lives.

Mr. Speaker, I again want to thank the people of the great State of Texas for all that they have done to help their neighbors in Louisiana.

HURRICANE KATRINA EXPOSES FAILURE OF FEDERAL POLICIES

(Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, Hurricane Katrina has inflicted destruction, suffering and death on our Nation. The people of Mississippi and Louisiana have our prayers, and they deserve our Nation's full support. Our gratitude also goes out to the relief workers, law enforcement and military personnel who are helping, healing and saving lives.

Now, as one Nation, Congress must act to provide the necessary relief, shelter, jobs, schools and hope our fellow citizens need to restart their lives. This is a long-term commitment, and these families must not be left behind.

Katrina exposed the Federal policies that have neglected and abandoned our Nation's poor, elderly and disabled. Congress must address these shameful failures of the Federal Government's pathetic emergency response that left thousands of Americans vulnerable, exposed and abandoned.

The American people and Katrina's victims deserve action and answers, and Congress has the obligation to deliver both.

WORKING TOGETHER TO FIX WHAT IS WRONG

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, we have all seen the horrors left in the wake of Hurricane Katrina over the past week. Yet, in the midst of this chaos and destruction, the American people, once again, demonstrated their compassion for those left with nothing. The American people and people from all over the world have opened not only their wallets, but also their homes, cities and schools. This compassion has not been limited to Americans alone. Over 70 countries have offered their assistance as well.

Now, a great deal of criticism has been leveled against the Federal Government's response, and much of it may be deserved. But there is also a