

we experienced in 2005 because this Nation continues to have a reactive policy to disasters, and it is something that we have got to change.

We could have taken the hundred-plus billion dollars that Congress appropriated following the 2005 hurricanes to help recover, to help get these communities back on their feet across the Gulf Coast. We could have taken a fraction of those dollars, and we could have invested it proactively and prevented it from happening.

Mr. Speaker, any city on our coast could experience the same disaster we saw; and I remind you, just in 2012, we saw Hurricane Sandy cause profound consequences in New York, New Jersey, and other communities on the East Coast. I will say it once again, disasters that were preventable, and so this is something that we all need to be paying attention to.

While in New Orleans, while in south Louisiana and Mississippi and in Alabama, there were amazing stories of communities coming together, of people coming together, of resilient families coming together to ensure that while this did knock them down, they were getting back up again, and they were going to recover—strong resolve from these communities all across the Gulf Coast.

Mr. Speaker, one other thing that was truly amazing is watching the incredible outpouring of support not just from the Gulf Coast, but from all over this Nation and countries around the world, committing to come help us recover across the Gulf Coast.

It was an amazing opportunity for people to come together, to put down differences, and to all come together in support of the recovery of these communities, the recovery of these families, the recovery of these businesses, the recovery of the hopes and dreams of these communities across the Gulf Coast.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to continue to see this play over and over again. We are going to continue to see these types of disasters over and over again until we turn the policies around in the United States, until we see fundamental changes.

Mr. Speaker, I want to pivot back to the recovery; I want to pivot back to New Orleans; I want to pivot back to Plaquemines Parish and St. Bernard, St. Tammany; I want to pivot back to lower Jefferson Parish. These communities, in many cases, were destroyed.

Everything was underwater, everything. I will say it again, the homes, the businesses, the schools, the hopes, the dreams, the future underwater—and 10 years ago, 10 years ago, unbelievable. I think that most people would have told you these communities aren't coming back; they can't come back. They have been so profoundly impacted that they simply can't recover from this, but that is not what happened.

As you just heard Mr. SCALISE discuss, people came together. We now

have an amazing progress, amazing recovery of our schools in south Louisiana, amazing recovery in our economy.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, we now have tens of billions of dollars in economic development projects on the horizon while, in other areas, you are seeing people losing jobs, you are seeing businesses close, you are seeing small businesses shut down and a trend of more small businesses closing and opening across the Nation; but in Louisiana, Mr. Speaker, tens of billions of dollars in new economic development projects on the horizon.

As a matter of fact, we have the largest foreign investment in U.S. history committed to projects in south Louisiana. We are seeing a manufacturing renaissance, and it is happening because our people are so resilient because we have come back, because we have come together, and because we have plotted a path to the future using the resources that Louisiana is so blessed with, the Louisiana maritime transportation system that we have, and the amazing natural resources in regard to the inexpensive, readily available natural gas, oil, petrochemical industry, the rail lines, the intermodal transportation facilities.

We have been able to accomplish a manufacturing renaissance not in Mexico, not in Asia, but right here in the United States in south Louisiana.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to say I pray that there is not another community, that there is not another city, that there is not another State in this Nation that has to experience, that has to go through the tragedy, the travesty that we experienced in south Louisiana, the loss of over 1,200 of our friends, our relatives, and our neighbors, to see the type of recovery, to see people come together.

To see us finally help to build a resilient protection system, resilient ecosystem to ensure that the next storm isn't going to cause the same devastation to New Orleans as we saw 10 years ago, I pray, Mr. Speaker, that that doesn't have to happen again.

The only way we prevent it from happening again is if people learn from the lessons of Hurricane Katrina, from Hurricane Rita, if they actually apply the lessons learned that we so painfully went through in south Louisiana, in Mississippi, and in Alabama, that we apply those lessons around the United States to make our communities more resilient; to make our economy more resilient; to make our businesses more resilient; to make our families more resilient; and, Mr. Speaker, most importantly, to ensure that we can all accomplish the American Dream.

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

10TH ANNIVERSARY OF
HURRICANE KATRINA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. RICHMOND) for 30 minutes.

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, I want to just thank my colleagues from Louisiana for also talking about the devastation that we received in hurricanes, both Katrina and Rita, which we call the "sister hurricanes" because they were only separated by a couple of days and what damage that Hurricane Katrina caused. Just a few days later, Hurricane Rita came right behind it and exacerbated that damage.

Let me just hit on a few of the misperceptions of Katrina. Well, actually, since I have had a little time and I want to make sure that everyone involved has a chance to have time to speak on this, I yield to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON), my good friend, who at the time was chair of the Homeland Security Committee, who made sure that some of the deficiencies in FEMA and some of the other places that caused us undue headaches during the rebuilding, that those headaches were relieved a little bit or eased a little bit because of the hard work of BENNIE THOMPSON, whose State also incurred some damage.

□ 1915

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. I appreciate the gentleman from New Orleans for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise for two reasons—one, to talk about what it is to be in the eye of a hurricane and to be without basic necessities for over 10 days because of a hurricane and, two, what it is that our government should do when those situations occur at the Federal, State, and local levels.

In my comments, initially, I will talk a little bit about what happened in August of 2005—how, in fact, so many people were impacted as well as what we have done as a government, what we didn't do, and what we should do in going forward.

As the gentleman from Louisiana has said, for the most part, both Hurricanes Rita and Katrina ravaged Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and a little bit of Florida, but I will limit my comments to Katrina. In Hurricane Katrina, there were over 1,800 people—from Florida to Texas—who died.

In my home State of Mississippi, 238 individuals died. Basically, what we had after that is over 1.2 million housing units damaged, and in my home State, almost 120,000 were completely destroyed. In southern Mississippi, that meant that over 60 percent of the single family dwellings were either destroyed or rendered uninhabitable, and the statistics were worse for rental units. Along the Gulf Coast—the beautiful Gulf Coast where we have the largest manmade beach in the United States—there were over 1 million people displaced. One month after the storm, 600,000 families were still homeless, and, ultimately, 114,000 were housed in FEMA trailers.

Mr. Speaker, I don't have to tell you what happened with the FEMA trailers. It was a mess. The government's

response to the temporary housing situation could only be characterized as a mess. We fixed it, but during that time, we put people in trailers that had basically been pieced together and shipped to the good people of the Gulf Coast. Many of them had Chinese drywall in those trailers that let off formaldehyde, which, ultimately, impacted the health of everybody we put in the trailers, ostensibly, for temporary housing. We created a bigger health problem.

Obviously, we passed legislation to address some of it in terms of the health costs and other things. Ultimately, a lawsuit provided some relief to the families. What we have done in correcting that temporary housing situation is to direct FEMA to not just be the response and recovery agency. We want you to also understand that, when people are in trouble, not only do you come, but you come with the right resources to make sure that you don't create and make life worse for them. After our Katrina experience, we have a more nimble operation, and we have far better individuals who are trained so that, when disasters come, we can respond.

The problem that I have goes back, Mr. Speaker, to the comments that a speaker on the other side made.

When you are in a disaster, whether it is a hurricane or a flood or a tornado, the last thing you want is for somebody to ask, "Well, who is going to pay for it?" These are citizens of the United States of America. The only thing we should say is, "In your darkest hour, in your time of need, your government will not let you down." I would hope that people understand that we are a great nation because we take care of all of our people, especially when the chips are down and when they have no other place to turn. So I would hope that we would not talk about issues of deficit spending when people are being plucked off the roofs of their homes or when they are being dislocated hundreds of miles from their residences simply because they can't get back into their neighborhoods.

What I also want to talk about is the fact that, since Katrina, we have made sure that first responders can communicate with each other. There were a number of stories about individuals who wanted to help but who couldn't talk to each other. Hopefully, we have started fixing that interoperability issue so that those individuals can communicate with each other, whether they are paid firemen, volunteer firepersons, or whether they are law enforcement at the State, county, or local level, because, when we are involved in any natural disaster that is federally declared, the constituents who need our help don't want us to get bogged down in the territories. They just want the help. Part of the help is making sure that these individuals can communicate with each other.

We had nonprofit organizations. The Red Cross, most specifically, was severely criticized because of its response

to Katrina. A substantial number of citizens who were impacted were in low-income, minority communities, and we started getting responses such as: "We don't know what to do in those areas"; "We are afraid to go in those areas." Yet, if you are part of the national preparedness system, you go and help; you don't try to qualify that help. Part of that agreement we have with an organization like the Red Cross is that you will do better, that you will respond when other organizations don't have the capacity.

We are continuing to work on the Red Cross' response to natural disasters in this country. Sometimes they do a good job, and sometimes they don't. What we have to do is make sure that, every time they respond, they respond in a manner that is helping someone. Regardless of people's socioeconomic statuses in life, they are still American citizens. I look forward to continuing to work on that.

The other thing we have to work on, Mr. Speaker, is in making sure that the moneys that are sent to the devastated areas don't get diverted to other areas.

In my home State of Mississippi, our Governor at the time diverted over \$600 million, which was directed to low- and middle-income housing problems, to a port expansion, which had nothing to do with housing, but the flexibility to do it was there. We had a number of people who lost everything they had, and they didn't have any means to come back. The moneys that we sent from Washington to attempt to make those individuals whole and to reintroduce them to the communities from which they had been displaced had been sent to the Port of Gulfport. It is a worthy project, but you shouldn't have to take moneys to do that which were intended by Congress to go for low- and middle-income housing.

As of this date, the requirements for that money still have not met the satisfaction of not only the HUD officials, but also of members of the communities. We should not take moneys in times of emergency and fund pet projects. If those projects are worthy to be funded, then let's fund them out of traditional sources and not out of emergency sources. I am concerned that we do that.

I want to pay a special tribute to the Mississippi Center for Justice, which has done a wonderful job in pursuing the expenditure of these funds consistent with the intent of those funds. I want to pay a special tribute as well to the Mississippi Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. They have provided witnesses and testimony at hearing after hearing as well as documentation about the questionable expenditures around Hurricane Katrina.

As I said in the beginning, as one of those individuals who experienced Katrina firsthand, our government has to step up and help these people in their time of need. What we have done

in the last 10 years is to attempt to fix everything that we have identified that didn't work. We have solved our interoperability problem. We have provided training for first responders. We have provided evacuation routes for individuals so that they know how to leave as well as routes for vulnerable populations or whether they are handicapped in some form. We have even created opportunities so that pets won't be left alone when evacuations occur. All of those things are very important because it goes to who we are as a people. So how we treat the least of them in their most desperate hours goes to the character of who we are as a nation.

As we mark this 10-year anniversary of Katrina, Mr. Speaker, I want us to understand that it is still a work in progress and that it doesn't matter whether you live in a house on a hill or if you live in a house around the corner that is at a dead end—you are still an American citizen. When things like a Hurricane Katrina happen, you should rest assured that your government will be Johnny on the spot.

As I step back from my microphone, I want to compliment the gentleman from Louisiana for leading this Special Order, because we should really understand how difficult Katrina has been for those individuals who were in the brunt.

Let me also take a point of personal privilege to talk about the good job that the men and women of the United States Coast Guard did in response to Katrina. They really did a tremendous job in working and in managing a lot of the recovery and response to Katrina.

In August 2005, nearly ten years ago, Hurricane Katrina made landfall in Mississippi and ravaged the Gulf Coast.

The storm pummeled everything in its path.

Over 1800 people from Florida to Texas died, including 238 from my home State of Mississippi.

After what felt like an eternity, the storm died down.

We inventoried our losses, and the painfully slow recovery process began.

1.2 million housing units were damaged, and 120,000 were completely destroyed.

In Southern Mississippi, more than 60 percent of single-family dwellings were destroyed or rendered uninhabitable—and the statistics were worse for rental units.

Along the Gulf Coast, over 1 million people were displaced.

One month after the storm, About 600,000 families were still homeless, and ultimately 114,000 were housed in FEMA trailers.

The recovery process was slow and wrought with mistakes at the Federal, State, and local level.

At the Federal level, chain-of-command and coordination failures complicated the quick and efficient delivery of Federal resources, undermining both response and recovery efforts.

Opportunities to pre-stage important resources were missed.

Interoperable emergency communications challenges and lack of qualified, well-trained, and well-funded emergency response personnel—capability gaps first identified during

the response to the September 11th attacks—persisted.

Ineffective and underdeveloped disaster housing and disaster procurement policies dragged out recovery efforts and drove up costs.

States appeared to lack capacity to draw-down Federal recovery funds quickly or effectively.

For example, my home state of Mississippi was awarded \$3 billion in Katrina related infrastructure grants, but by January 2009, it had only drawn down a little over half of those funds (\$1.7 million).

FEMA allocated \$156 million in hazard mitigation grant funds to Mississippi, but the State had only drawn down \$40 million two-and-a-half years after the storm struck.

My governor at the time diverted \$600 million in CDBG funds initially intended for the construction of low and middle income housing to a port expansion project.

Parts of southern Mississippi are still feeling the impact of that ill-advised decision to this day.

In the aftermath of the storm, Congress overhauled the national emergency management infrastructure by enacting The Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act, or PKEMRA.

The legislation sought to address preparedness, response and recovery gaps identified through oversight activities carried out by this Committee, including:

(1) apparent uncertainty regarding who had authority to coordinate and direct response and recovery efforts under the National Response Plan;

(2) ineffective coordination of Federal, state, local, private sector response and recovery efforts;

(3) inadequate Federal coordination of preparedness planning, including lack of effective evacuation and temporary housing plans to meet the needs of all of those in a community;

(4) lack of operable and interoperable communications to support response and recovery efforts; and,

(5) lack of effective emergency alert and warning systems to notify the public of potential threats to health and safety.

Nationally, we have made progress on addressing these gaps.

For example, we have saved lives by getting people out of danger's path with the Integrated Public Alerts and Warnings System.

Our planning and exercise programs have improved relationships among Federal, State, and local responders to facilitate quicker, more effective response and recovery efforts.

And we have honed the national doctrine on preventing, protecting against, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from natural and manmade disasters.

But significant challenges with long term recovery efforts remain.

For example, the Federal government's failure to have adequate disaster housing plans in place before the storm struck resulted in last-minute scrambling to find long-term recovery housing for the displaced.

We ended up with botched FEMA trailer contracts that cost taxpayers millions of dollars, and ultimately provided Hurricane survivors with formaldehyde-laced dwellings.

A class action lawsuit from 55,000 Gulf Coast Residents against over two dozen mobile home manufacturers was finally settled for over \$42.5 million in 2012.

Despite this difficult lesson, as we saw in 2012 after Hurricane Sandy, developing viable disaster housing options for regions across the United States continues to be an elusive goal.

Although we have made progress on achieving interoperability, gaps continue to hinder effective responses.

Despite the horrific loss, survivors demonstrated inspiring resilience.

And the American people proved once again their commitment to helping those affected by disaster by sending resources and flocking affected areas to aid recovery.

Over the past decade, Gulf Coast residents, with Federal support and the help of volunteers from across the country, have rebuilt much of what was lost.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the important work of the Mississippi Conference of the NAACP and the Mississippi Center for Justice.

Both of those organizations traveled to and opened offices on the Coast to offer legal services to the thousands of Gulf Coast area residents who needed an advocate to help make them whole.

Notably, they filed a lawsuit on behalf of community groups and individuals against the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development resulting in a landmark settlement of \$132 million dollars for low-income households in nine Mississippi counties.

The Mississippi Center for Justice has continued to spearhead numerous Federal and state policy battles to demand and restore safe and affordable housing to Hurricane Katrina's most vulnerable survivors, including thousands of children.

The Hurricane Katrina recovery, in many respects, has become a story of American perseverance and generosity—and I am glad we are here to commemorate and honor it this evening.

Mr. RICHMOND. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, let me inquire as to how much time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HARDY). The gentleman has 17 minutes remaining.

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, before I get into some of the misconceptions and perceptions that still remain from Katrina, let me just finish where the gentleman from Mississippi left off.

In its aftermath and the rescue and recovery, one of the shining stars during Hurricane Katrina was the United States Coast Guard. They did a phenomenal job, both day and night, in rescuing people with helicopters and boats and everything at their disposal. They didn't care if they were tired, and they didn't care if they were hungry. They just did the job that they should have done just like most of our servicemen. They were the shining stars.

□ 1930

I mentioned earlier that one of the perceptions that is just inaccurate about Katrina was that it was a natural disaster. It is not just me who will call it a manmade disaster.

In 2009, Judge Duval ruled that the Federal Government was liable for the damage related to MRGO because the canal's original purpose was naviga-

tion. That decision was affirmed, and then it was overturned by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit.

However, on May 1, 2015, a Federal claims judge, Susan Braden, ruled that the Army Corps of Engineers is liable for damages resulting from flooding during Katrina again and that the damage caused in both St. Bernard Parish, which is not in my district, and the lower Ninth Ward of New Orleans, which is in my district, was that the Army Corps of Engineers was responsible and liable for the damage caused to their homes because the Coast Guard was responsible for the increased storm surge and flooding during Hurricane Katrina and that the Army Corps knew that their failure could have that effect.

So Judge Braden has ordered that the Federal Government, more specifically, the Justice Department, enter into settlement negotiations with the attorneys of those residents in both the lower Ninth Ward and St. Bernard Parish. I would just continue to urge the Federal Government to step up to do that because it is the right thing to do.

Some of the other things that I just want to spend a quick moment in correcting are that, after the storm, there was violence in the streets and people were shooting at the rescue boats. That was just absolutely untrue.

As I tout the success of the Coast Guard, I have to now question and criticize the effort of both the Red Cross and our National Guard.

In the days after Katrina, there were Red Cross buses on the side of the highway that lined from New Orleans all the way to Baton Rouge because the buses were scared to go into New Orleans because it was dangerous.

The Red Cross and the National Guard had 18-wheelers and military trucks full of water that were designated to go into New Orleans, but they were on the side of the interstate opposite the buses because they thought it was too dangerous to go into New Orleans.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I just want to tell you, while the National Guard, the Red Cross, and others were scared to go into New Orleans, I myself, with another council member, Oliver Thomas at the time, was driving a minivan into New Orleans filled with water with no security, no protection, and the only thing we encountered were grateful people who were looking for some help, some water, some food, and some direction as to how and when this recovery would start.

What I don't want is people to look at New Orleans and remember back to those days and just believe the misinformation about all of those other things.

While I am correcting that, let me also touch on why people didn't leave. Many people have said people just chose not to leave for various reasons, they didn't know better. All of that is absolutely untrue, also.

The biggest reason people didn't leave was that the warnings were weak

and they were not enough notice. I remember watching the news and watching the mayor of New Orleans say: Well, I am sending my family to Dallas. If I were you, I would evacuate.

Well, in moments like this, you need stern warnings and you have to be blunt.

I was on the conference calls where FEMA and Red Cross said that they were sending 10,000 body bags. We knew this was the real one. It was the time to show leadership and tell people to leave the city in no uncertain terms.

I remember having a conference call with Governor Blanco in which she talked about all of these things, along with the Red Cross and FEMA.

By the time that it was my turn to talk, I said, "Governor, I understand that this is the real deal. However, there are 1,500 people across the street from my house playing Little League. They don't get the benefit of hearing what you just said on this conference call."

It was later that day and the next morning that people pushed, but it was only a day out from the storm.

And then we never talked about the expenses associated with evacuating once or twice in the city, packing your family up, driving to another city, paying for a hotel, feeding your family, and then coming back.

When that happens over and over again and they were false alarms, if you don't give them the stern warning when you know it is the real one, you know some people won't leave.

The last part of it is we came up with a bad idea of using shelters that were in harm's way. We had thousands of people in the Louisiana Superdome that is located in New Orleans. Well, the Superdome was right in harm's way.

One of the other perceptions—and you actually heard it tonight—was that the new New Orleans has a great school system that has turned around education in this urban setting, and the truth of the matter is it is a work in progress at best.

The State came in and took over most of our schools, all but maybe five or six of them. Out of those 57 schools that they took over, seven are B schools, no A schools, 20 are C schools, and 24 are D and F schools.

We still have some work to do in the area of education. We have made some improvements, but we have kids now that are being bused and staying on the bus almost 2 hours to get to a school in the morning and 2 hours in the evening. That is not a system that we want.

Our good schools don't have attendance zones, and it has become a maze in order to apply and to get into our better schools.

Those are things that can be fixed if everybody is willing to come to the table and figure out the best way to do it and not look at everyone who has suggestions or criticisms of the school system as being an enemy.

Public education: Even if you look at the Brown v. Board of Education decision years ago, 50, 75 years ago, that decision came about because the Justices talked about how an education is important to being a good citizen, thriving, and being a success.

Because of that, we should spend more time in working to make sure that the New Orleans public school system is a system that educates all of the kids.

Whether you are Black or White, whether you are poor or rich, whether you live in a great neighborhood or whether you live in a bad neighborhood, every kid should have the opportunity to succeed.

The other thing that people see a lot now, whether we are hosting a Super Bowl, the Final Four, or the Sugar Bowl, people assume that the city is back because the areas that they cover on TV are the areas that are back.

If you look at Canal Street, Bourbon Street, and all of those areas, the Superdome, the New Orleans arena, they are back.

However, there are still areas that are not back. You still have areas where homeowners are still struggling to rebuild.

You can look at the lower Ninth Ward. You can look at the upper Ninth Ward. You can look at Gentilly. You can look at New Orleans East. Those areas are still fighting to recover.

You can look at some of the complaints from homeowners when the Road Home process was set up. They complain that they were fingerprinted and treated like criminals during the application process in the onset of asking for government assistance.

Remember, we are talking about homeowners, the most responsible people in a community, being fingerprinted and treated like criminals during the application process.

Also, the Federal Government prohibited grants exceeding the value of a property. So Road Home tied its calculation to a home's prestorm value as opposed to the actual cost of rebuilding.

So when you look at the 36,000 grant recipient collection letters for alleged overpayments, duplication of insurance proceeds, or failure to comply with the covenants, you see 36,000 people that are being unjustly punished by the Federal Government.

I would just say that we said it very early on in the process, that using appraised value was going to harm minority communities because an appraisal is subjective, depending on where you live. So homes in the more affluent areas of New Orleans appraised a lot higher.

I can just tell you, doing electrical work when I was small, doing construction work, to rebuild a 1,500-square-foot house, whether it is in Lakeview or whether it is in the lower Ninth Ward, Sheetrock, plywood, screws, and nails are all going to cost the same. Instead of using appraised value, we

should have used rebuilding cost. That is just not my opinion.

I will tell you that the Federal court ruled that the Road Home's method of calculating grants discriminated against African American homeowners. That was back in 2010.

The problem with that ruling was that, in order for the State to stop using prestorm value to calculate Road Home grants, it was only for the future grants. By that time, a majority of the grants had already been given out.

So I will just tell you that that \$62 million in additional grants helped about 1,500 homeowners. Remember, we had over 100,000 properties that were damaged in the storm. So you can see the abundance of people that did not get assistance.

Some of the other remaining issues with Road Home was that we still have people who need money to get back into their homes because they have an unmet need.

HUD could have done something very simple to figure out where we are now, and that is to figure out what people received from their insurance company, what people received from FEMA, and what people received from Road Home.

You add those up and then you figure out the cost to rebuild. If the rebuilding cost exceeds those, that is the unmet need that we need help from the government because there is money that is still available.

I would say we need the Federal Government to actually take some time, investigate, and figure out how we can use the unused money to make people whole that were not made whole in the beginning.

Also, let me bring up just one other thing so you can get a full idea of the picture of New Orleans. If you just look at rent, in the 9 years since Katrina, the share of people paying 50 percent of their income for rent is now 37 percent.

So what you are really saying is that secure housing cost burdens 50 percent of household income, and that indicates a serious problem in housing affordability.

In 2004, just to give you a reference, the share of severely cost-burdened renters in New Orleans was 24 percent. Now it is 37 percent in New Orleans. It is 26 percent nationally.

That is a problem and we really need to work on it because, if you can't live in the city, you can't work in the city. This government is better than that.

So the other thing I would just say is that people think we are back and we are rebuilt, and that is not the case. The other thing is that people think that we received everything we need to rebuild.

I would say that Congress, the government, and the President did a great job in immediately sending down \$14 billion to New Orleans and putting it in a fund, which is unheard of in Congress, to take money and just put it in a fund and say: Corps of Engineers, as you rebuild the levee, spend this

money, protect New Orleans. They did it, and they did a good job of doing it.

We still have outlying areas that need flood control. If you look at the cost of Katrina—and I will give you a few figures—you will see that we still have a gap.

You had \$150 billion in damages. Most of the Federal spending went for relief, not rebuilding. \$120.5 billion in total spending. Emergency relief was 75 billion. Rebuilding funds was 45 billion.

So if you look at the Federal funding, private insurance claims, and charitable giving, it still leaves a gap of about \$60 billion. When you talk about a gap of \$60 billion, I just want you to understand what that means.

That means, in every community, every neighborhood, including mine, you will see five houses where people have come back, saved up money, and rebuilt using both insurance, savings, retirement, FEMA, government money. Then you will see a house or two that is not rebuilt at all.

Then if you go down to the lower Ninth Ward, you will see one house that is rebuilt. Then you will see six or seven houses that are not rebuilt where the grass is just as high as the trees and it looks like a forest.

If you are that one homeowner that took the time to come home and rebuild and you have to pass that every night, it is just not a safe situation. We, as a country, can do better than that.

So what I would hope is that, as we continue the process of helping New Orleans and Louisiana recover from Katrina, that we look at the lessons learned and we find the people who still have unmet needs, we find the people that are still not back in their homes who want to be in their homes, and we figure out a way to help them.

□ 1945

That is what HUD is for. We still have the money, and in fact, citizens and community groups—and I can think of a bunch of them, A Community Voice, Justice and Beyond—all of those groups have been asking Congress and the inspector general to do an audit and an investigation of how much funds we received, where did they go, what is left, how do we move forward and make sure that everyone who wants to come home has the ability to come home.

Now, all of those things and, I think, lessons learned and misperceptions of

Katrina, I think we have to take those same things and look at Sandy and all other hurricanes.

What I wanted to do before we went home for a break and celebrate the 10th anniversary of Katrina is to let people know that we still have needs; we still have things we have to do to complete the recovery, but also thank Congress for what they did do.

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

CONTINUATION OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO LEBANON—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114-53)

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, referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, within 90 days prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the national emergency with respect to Lebanon that was declared in Executive Order 13441 of August 1, 2007, is to continue in effect beyond August 1, 2015.

Certain ongoing activities, such as continuing arms transfers to Hizballah that include increasingly sophisticated weapons systems, undermine Lebanese sovereignty, contribute to political and economic instability in the region, and continue to constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13441 with respect to Lebanon.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, July 29, 2015.

COMMUNICATION FROM CHAIR OF COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Chair of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; which was read and, without objection, referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,

Washington, DC, July 28, 2015.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,
*Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,
The Capitol, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: On July 23, 2015, pursuant to section 3307 of Title 40, United States Code, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure met in open session to consider 15 resolutions included in the General Services Administration's fiscal years 2015 and 2016 Capital Investment and Leasing Programs.

The Committee continues to work to reduce the cost of federal property and leases. Of the 15 resolutions considered by the Committee, the nine alteration projects will address critical life safety repairs or allow for space consolidations, the two reprogramming prospectuses are fully offset by reductions in other projects, the two construction prospectuses include offsets and reductions in spending from avoided lease costs, and the two lease prospectuses will result in significant reductions in lease costs through the reduction of space. In total, these resolutions represent \$327 million in avoided lease costs and offsets.

I have enclosed copies of the resolutions adopted by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on July 23, 2015.

Sincerely,

BILL SHUSTER,
Chairman.

Enclosures.

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

ALTERATION—JACOB K. JAVITS FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING, NEW YORK, NY

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives, that pursuant to 40 U.S.C. §3307, appropriations are authorized for the design for the build out of approximately 314,000 rentable square feet of vacant space in the Jacob K. Javits Federal Office Building located at 26 Federal Plaza in New York City, New York, of which approximately 30,000 rentable square feet will provide swing space for future alteration and consolidation projects in the building, at a design cost of \$7,660,000, a prospectus for which is attached to and included in this resolution.

Provided, that the General Services Administration shall not delegate to any other agency the authority granted by this resolution.