



Citizens for 1 Greater New Orleans

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Times-Picayune

EDITORIAL: Thanks a billion

Thursday, November 15, 2007

Louisiana has several billion reasons to thank Congress this week, and state officials are working to make sure the message gets across.

Gov. Kathleen Blanco and Gov.-elect Bobby Jindal were in Washington Tuesday to visit with Senate leaders and thank them for their help with a \$3 billion bailout of the Road Home program and other recovery aid.

Tuesday happened to be the day President Bush signed the defense bill that included the Road Home money, so it was an appropriate moment to express thanks. The money is essential for thousands of Louisianians to be able to get the housing grants they need to rebuild their lives.

To emphasize the message delivered by Gov. Blanco and Gov.-elect Jindal, the Louisiana Recovery Authority launched the Louisiana Gives Thanks campaign Tuesday. Anyone can go to the LRA Web site at Ira.louisiana.gov and click on a link to send letters of thanks to Congress and the Bush administration for the recovery aid coming our way.

The federal money is only just, given the breadth of the damage in South Louisiana and the fact that a large portion was caused by the failure of federal levees.

Even so, the approval of another \$3 billion in Road Home money and the authorization of more than \$7 billion in levee and coastal restoration work is a positive development. More than two years after Katrina and Rita, these actions are a sign that the federal government hasn't forgotten us. These votes are also a demonstration that the current Congress is making good on promises leaders made when they were elected a year ago to help this region continue to recover.

The vast damage in South Louisiana will take time to repair, and residents here will need the continuing help of the federal government to make a full recovery. For now, we should all take a moment and say thank you for the immense help we've gotten so far.

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