

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 8, 2005

Dear Mr. President,

For the Hurricane-affected regions of Louisiana and Mississippi, the economic devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina is on par with effects of the Great Depression. Unemployment is on a huge scale. We ask that you issue an Executive Order requiring all contractor companies receiving federal Hurricane relief dollars to hire local residents of the Hurricane-affected region and pay them a living wage.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, of the 510,000 private-sector workers in the New Orleans metropolitan statistical area, "the majority will be off payrolls at least through September, with only a gradual rebound." Another 113,000 in the Gulfport-Biloxi MSA and 54,000 in the Pascagoula MSA face unemployment caused by the Hurricane's devastation of workplaces, transportation routes, public utilities and housing.

The House of Representatives has already appropriated over \$60 billion for the region, and will surely appropriate more. But restrictions on the rule governing debate and amendments made it impossible for us to debate an amendment to require contractors receiving federal Hurricane relief dollars to hire locally and pay a living wage.

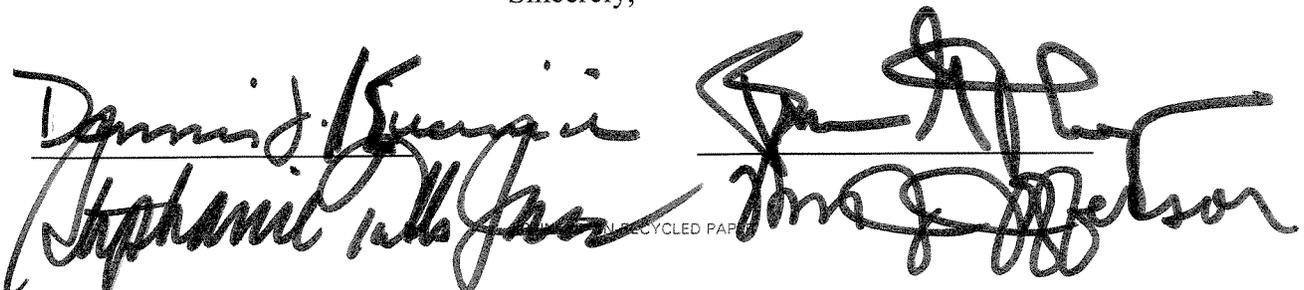
During the Great Depression, the federal government put millions of unemployed people to work rebuilding the country's infrastructure with federal dollars. The hurricane-demolished region needs a similar emphasis today.

We ask that you issue an Executive Order to require contractors receiving federal Hurricane relief funds to:

- 1) hire locally to the greatest extent feasible. Specifically, contractors for non-construction projects would be required to meet local hiring goal of 50%, and contractors for construction projects would be required to meet a local hiring goal of 25%.
- 2) pay each employee a wage of no less than \$6.55 per hour if that employee is currently being provided health insurance under a health insurance policy maintained by that employer, or no less than \$7.75 per hour if that employee is not currently being provided health insurance under a health insurance policy maintained by that employer.

This is an urgent matter. We ask that you issue this executive order at the same time you sign into law the Hurricane relief funds appropriated by HR 3673.

Sincerely,

  
Dennis J. King  
Stephanie Hill  
Tom J. Nelson

Chas Fattel

John Brown

Caroline McCaff

Arthur

W.C. Shaw

Phulomys

B.E. Tracy

Ed Strickland

Ernest Rume

Sanford Bishop

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Liane G. Watson

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John R. Rosten

Mike Mentzer

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Michael Michael  
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John Brown

~~Paul Holt~~

Wynne Weyman

Manuel Lindberg

Donald McPayne

Bill Woodard

Ray Allen  
George Miller

Shirley Allen

Paul Holt

Marlene Wicks

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