

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi,

As representatives of diverse Gulf Coast communities and their national supporters, we thank you for your support of rebuilding the Gulf Coast. During the campaign season, as hurricanes Ike and Gustav struck, Americans were reawakened to the unmet needs Gulf Coast communities still face in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita more than three years later. In visits to the Gulf Coast, you have articulated a desire to partner with hurricane survivors as they rebuild their communities and revitalize the region's economy.

Whether by inaction or injustice, we still have failed to protect the rights and wellbeing of Gulf Coast survivors, immigrants and their families, especially the children, the elderly, the poor, the sick, and the vulnerable. The collapse of local institutions, homelessness, internal displacement, poverty, abusive labor practices and environmental degradation mean communities continue to suffer and struggle unduly.

This crisis demands a powerful response. Despite the millions of hours volunteered by selfless Americans and the heroic efforts of residents, Gulf Coast communities still lack a robust and responsive federal partner in their recovery. As Speaker of the United States House of Representative we hope that you will ensure that \$6.7 billion for Gulf Coast Civic Works projects is included in your upcoming economic recovery plan.

The Gulf Coast Civic Works Program fits well within your plan to create 3 million jobs. The program would directly partner with communities to create 100,000 "green" jobs and training opportunities to tackle local recovery challenges and revitalize the region's economy. Working with local officials and community organizations it would; rebuild and repair vital public infrastructure including schools, police and fire stations, hospitals, parks, roads, flood protection, and restore eroding natural flood protection like marshes and wetlands. This comprehensive approach will train a new generation of skilled workers, encourage green building techniques, promote local businesses and help communities build resilience to future disasters, securing vital national security interests along America's Gulf Coast.

This policy has bipartisan support from 27 Members of Congress including Representatives Rodney Alexander, Sheila Jackson-Lee, Charlie Melancon, Gene Taylor, and Bennie Thompson, over 100 supporting organizations, dozens of national faith leaders, as well as the Louisiana Republican Party, the New Orleans City Council, and the Lafourche and Terrebonne, LA Parish Councils. The Gulf Coast Civic Works Program includes oversight and community participation in federal investment and serves as an innovative model for tackling our national need for infrastructure and green jobs.

It is our sincere hope and prayer that you will support Gulf Coast Civic Works Program by including \$6.7 billion for this program in your economic recovery legislation.

Signed,

232-HELP/Louisiana 211  
ACORN  
AFL-CIO Investment Trust Program, Gulf Coast Revitalization Program  
Alabama Appleseed Center for Law & Justice, Inc.  
Alabama Arise  
All Congregations Together  
Appleseed  
Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America  
Bay Area Women Coalition, Inc  
Bayou Interfaith Shared Community Organizing  
Bayou Grace Community Services  
Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Southeast Louisiana  
Biloxi Branch NAACP  
BIT Bayou Interfaith Together  
BlueStone Ministries  
CDC58:12, Inc.  
Center for Ethical Living and Social Justice Renewal  
Christian Justice Action (United Church of Christ )  
Christian Methodist Episcopal Church  
Church of the Brethren Witness/Washington Office  
Churches Supporting Churches  
Clergy Strategic Alliances  
Coastal Women for Change  
Color of Change  
Common Cause  
Common Ground Health Clinic  
Community Center of St Bernard  
Community of Christ Outreach Program  
COPE Congregations Organizing People for Equality  
Deep South Center for Environmental Justice at Dillard University  
Desire Street Ministries  
Disciples Justice Action Network (Disciples of Christ)  
ENPHRONT, INC  
Episcopal Appalachian Ministries  
Episcopal Network for Economic Justice  
Equal Partners in Faith  
Equity and Inclusion Campaign  
Evangelicals for Human Rights  
Every Child Matters Education Fund Louisiana  
Finding Our Folks  
First Pilgrims Baptist Church JEDC HDM (New Orleans, LA)  
FUEL Faith United for Empowerment and Leadership  
Gert Town Revival Initiative  
Global Green USA  
Green For All  
Gulf Coast Civic Works Project  
Gulf Coast Fair Housing Center  
Gulf Coast Southeast Asian Resource Center, Inc.

Gulf Restoration Network  
Gulf South Allied Funders  
Hands On New Orleans  
Hope Community Development Agency  
Hope Haven of Hancock County Inc.  
In This Together, Inc.  
Institute for Southern Studies  
Institute of Women & Ethnic Studies  
Interfaith Worker Justice  
Jewish Reconstructionist Federation  
Judy Drive Civic Association, Meraux, LA  
Keys To Abundant Life Community Outreach Agency, Inc  
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law  
Louisiana Appleseed  
Louisiana Association of Nonprofit Organizations  
Louisiana Community Reinvestment Coalition  
Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation  
Louisiana Environmental Action Network  
Louisiana Housing Alliance  
Lower Mississippi Riverkeeper  
May Day New Orleans  
Mennonite Central Committee U.S., Washington Office  
MICAH Project  
Middle Collegiate Church (New York, NY)  
Minnesota Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild  
Minnesota Tenants Union  
Minnesota-New Orleans Solidarity Committee  
MIRA! Mississippi Immigrants Rights Alliance  
Mississippi Center for Justice  
Mississippi Coast Interfaith Disaster Task Force  
Mississippi Poultry Workers for Equality and Respect  
MQVN Community Development Corporation  
Ms. Foundation for Women  
National Alliances of Vietnamese American Service Agencies  
National Council of Churches  
National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference  
National Economic and Social Rights Initiative  
National Employment Law Project  
National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty  
Neighborhood Housing Services of New Orleans, Inc.  
Neighborhood Partnership Network  
NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby  
New Orleans Neighborhood Development Collaborative  
North Gulfport Community Land Trust  
Northside Neighbors for Justice  
Orleans Recovery Foundation (ORF)  
Ouachita Riverkeeper  
OXFAM America  
Pax Christi USA: National Catholic Peace Movement

People for Community Recovery  
PICO Louisiana  
PICO National Network  
PolicyLink  
Praxis Project  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Washington Office  
Presbytery of So. Louisiana Recovery  
Prince Garrett Ministries (McLain, MS)  
Protestant Justice Action  
Providence Community Housing  
Puentes New Orleans, Inc.  
REJOICE, Inc. Resource Center for Families  
Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights  
Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference  
Shelter Resources, Inc. d.b.a. Belle Reve New Orleans  
Sierra Club, Mississippi Chapter  
Sisters of Charity of New York, Office of Justice and Peace  
Soria City Civic Organization (South Gulfport, MS)  
South Bay Communities Alliance  
Steps Coalition  
Survivors Village New Orleans  
Technical Assistance Collaborative  
Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services (t.e.j.a.s.)  
Turkey Creek Community Initiatives (TCCI)  
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations  
Unitarian Universalist Service Committee  
United Christian Community Association  
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries  
United Hearts Community Action Agency, Inc.  
United Houma Nation  
UNITY of Greater New Orleans with Common Ground Institute  
Volunteers of America  
Women Donors Network  
YOUTHAnasia Foundation Inc.  
Youth Build Americorps Katrina Rebuilding Project  
Zion Travelers Cooperative Center, Inc

**Attachments:**

- Overview: Gulf Coast Civic Works Program

## **Gulf Coast Civic Works Program: "Green" Jobs to Rebuild America's Gulf Coast Communities**

The Gulf Coast Civic Works Program would fund "green" resident-led recovery projects, allowing local organizations to respond to the unmet needs of communities devastated by the hurricanes of 2005 and 2008. This project would enable the Office of Gulf Coast Recovery and Rebuilding to partner directly with local communities to plan, oversee and administer recovery projects, providing communities with tools to revitalize the region economically while building resilience against the impact of future disasters. A minimum of 100,000 jobs and training opportunities on projects ranging from improving infrastructure to restoring the coastal environment would be created for local and displaced workers, empowering Gulf Coast residents to create stronger, safer, and more equitable communities.

The Gulf Coast Civic Works Program would:

Rebuild Vital Public Infrastructure and Restore the Environment by:

- Rebuilding and repairing schools, police and fire stations, hospitals, parks, roads, water and sewer systems, housing, and cultural centers;
- Building equitable flood protection through restoring barrier islands, marshes and wetlands;
- Enhancing energy efficiency and conservation to better protect vulnerable populations from the effects of climate change and;
- Serving as a model for engaging residents in disaster recovery and sustainable economic development.

Create Good "Green" Jobs and Provide Job Training by:

- Creating 100,000 fair wage jobs and training opportunities for Gulf Coast residents;
- Encouraging contractors to provide opportunities for apprenticeship and on-the-job training, preparing workers and businesses for the growing "green jobs" industry;
- Encouraging cutting edge green building techniques and technologies to minimize carbon emissions and energy costs and;
- Creating a Civic Conservation Corps to train a new generation of workers to restore the coastline.

Spur Equitable and Sustainable Community Development by:

- Engaging community leaders and local officials to determine projects based on community needs, through innovative local advisory councils;
- Strengthening the workforce by providing good jobs with fair wages and strong worker protections, much needed skills training and additional funding for community colleges and training facilities and;
- Creating contracting opportunities for local businesses.

Require Accountability and Community Oversight by:

- Working with the Office of Gulf Coast Recovery and Rebuilding to provide oversight and transparency, give logistical and administrative assistance, and allocate funding to the local communities through a resident-driven grant-making process.
- Involving communities in overseeing contractors to avoid waste and fraud.

For More Information about the Gulf Coast Civic Works Campaign contact:

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