



**South Bay Communities Alliance, Coden–AL Port–Heron Bay- Mon Luis– Sans Souci, AL**

**“South Mobile County, Alabama...should be evaluated for Environmental Justice concerns ... Incomes in this area are considered to be low to modest without a significant middle class....The colonial population consisted of a mixture of French, African, and Native Americans. Social and racial lines tended to be and remain somewhat blurred as a consequence of this background. ....there is a recent emergence of what locals term a “Creasian” culture resulting from the blending of the longstanding Creole and Cajun and recent Asian ethnicities [Emphasis added].” (Social Impact Assessment sponsored by US Coast Guard, Jan. 2005, John F. Salter, Ph.D.)** -----

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

Feb 11, 2009

**Re. Request from Alabama Congressman Artur Davis to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Nov. 13, 2008:**  
*As you consider a second economic stimulus bill, please allow me to direct your attention to the recent testimony....on behalf of Governor Bob Riley...that three years after Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast, the small towns... dotting Alabama’s coastline continue their struggle to rebuild...over 3,400 occupied housing units suffered major or severe damage.... approximately 1,020 qualify for assistance...with existing funds; the county will be able to assist less than 300 households” (Attached); And request for the **Gulf Coast Civic Works Act***

My name is Paul Nelson, and as president of the grass-roots **South Bay Communities Alliance**, I want to first of all congratulate you on your inspiring election as President of our country. Also, as one of the 3500 people from the proudly multicultural maritime villages on Alabama’s coast, and one of the hundreds in these communities who have lost family, homes, jobs, and businesses to Katrina, I want to say that ***your triumph greatly inspired our hopes that we will finally win our struggle to rebuild. Sadly, our struggle has also become one of life and death. Mrs. Nghieu Nguyen, pictured below with her daughter, is one of many people who represent this tragedy.***



Photo Nov. 4, 2008 by Kieu Lien Atwell, Case-Worker Boat People SOS, & Zack Carter, Organizer Alabama Arise

**“My name is Nghieu Nguyen. I lived with my daughter at 8875 Lindberg Street [Bayou La Batre, AL] for 5 years before Hurricane Katrina. When Katrina came my house was flooded....Everything in our house was**

destroyed...because I don't speak English I was not able to get enough help...my house has mold...I have lung cancer...water leaks through my roof and my front door is falling apart. I beg for any organization to please help this mother and daughter.” (Mrs. Nguyen’s and her case-worker’s statements are attached). The attached Jan. 29, 2009 letter to Alabama Arise from the Katrina Community Development Grant Program Administrator under contract with the Mobile County Commission provides detailed figures and a testimonial supporting the *bi-partisan requests* from Congressman Artur Davis, Alabama Senator Richard Shelby and Alabama Congressman Jo Bonner:

**The staff and I feel that we could write a book full of stories from Mobile County Alabama... trees remained on top of houses; roofs continued to leak ruining what remained of interior ceilings, walls and floors; heating and air conditioning systems were destroyed; septic systems became clogged and sewage backed up into many homes; and people were stricken with physical and mental illnesses due to their unsanitary and demoralizing living conditions**

**...we are making strides in improving the housing conditions of the citizens of Mobile County who remain eligible program applicants and Hurricane Katrina victims....71 homes have been replaced or repaired; another 30 homes are under contract; and replacement or repair of another 70 homes is in process. However, the need remains great.**

### **Hundreds of Alabama Victims Who’s Homes Were Destroyed Still Not Rebuilt**

Ms. McHugh details the unmet needs: **We have identified some 120 conventional or manufactured homes that are either completely gone or are totally uninhabitable...some 500 homes continue to need an extensive degree of rehabilitation. This need cannot be met with the existing funds remaining in the CDBG grant.**

However, Ms. McHugh points out there are hundreds of other Katrina Ms. McHugh that are not part of the Mobile Katrina CDBG program – renters, and those who missed the (one week) deadline , she writes:

**Unfortunately, this estimate does not take into account the hundreds of Mobile citizens who either applied after the program deadline or have called our office since that time...It also does not take into account hundreds of renters who lost all of their worldly possessions and had to start over with little....Due to limited funding, Mobile County had to make a difficult choice to prioritize homeowners and the program has been unable to assist renters.**

These families who missed out on CDBG grant applications range throughout Mobile County, including Trinity Gardens, another historic African American community in north Mobile. Please see the attached flyers for the two Mobile County wide tours for “Neglected Alabama Katrina Victims”.

Ms. McHugh poignantly places Katrina Victims unmet needs in the context of our current economic depression: **While the United States is reeling from an economic downturn...Americans struggle to deal with loss of jobs...most of us cannot fathom what it is like to face these challenges along with trying to rebuild a home that was lost or damaged by Hurricane Katrina...**

### **Most Families in the City and County of Mobile Who Qualified for a Katrina CDBG Are Either Poor, Old, Single Parents, or Care for Disabled Family Members**

***Our struggle to rebuild is even harder to fathom when one considers that the 1020 plus Alabama families who qualified for a Katrina CDBG in the County and City of Mobile, were already among “the least of these”: 39% had household incomes under \$15,000 a year; 31% of the families lived with a disabled person; 166 of them were headed by an elderly person; 58% have one or more minor children “often headed by a single parent (or grandparent).”*** This uncontroverted testimony was provided at the same May 8 Congressional hearing that Congressman Davis cites in his letter to Speaker Pelosi. It was provided on behalf of Alabama

Applesed by Craig Baab, who was invited by Alabama Congressman Spencer Bachus.

<http://financialservices.house.gov/hearing110/baab.pdf>

My community, Alabama's southwest Gulf Coast, was hit the hardest by Katrina in our state. But Ms. McHugh's data shows that we also have Katrina Victims suffering throughout the City and County of Mobile.

In the historic Africa American communities, of Prichard (zip code 36617) and Plateau, (zip code 36610) which encompass old Africatown (<http://www.arts.state.al.us/act/articles/africa.htm>), there are there are 217 families who qualified for one of the Mobile Katrina CDBG grants. There are 177 families that qualified for assistance and who live along Dauphin Island Parkway on the southeastern edge of the city limits of Mobile (36605). For generations this community, known as "D.I.P." has been a mix of working class and middle class, both black and white. And in **Satchel Paige's** old Mobile neighborhood of "Down the Bay" there are 59 families who have qualified.

Katrina CDBG applications were not available unit January 2007. Katrina hit these families hard on August, 29, 2005. Now they are about to be hit again with the harder news – *the federal government won't fund the grant that they qualified for two years ago and desperately need.*

### **The Number of Alabama's Kartina Victims Who Have Died without a Home Keep Growing**

No one perished in Alabama during Katrina, *but eleven of my family and neighbors, most of who lived within a half-mile radius of my home*, have died since. They all saw their houses either blown away or flooded by Katrina. Each had to go to their graves without hope of having their homes rebuilt, or repaired for their children and spouses. And many of these long-time community members spent a year or more in formaldehyde contaminated FEMA campers. All of the FEMA campers randomly tested by the Sierra Club in Alabama showed excessive formaldehyde vapors, including the one my mother Hilda Nelson lived in. (Attached: Sierra Club's Gulf Coast Formaldehyde Test Results)

As our maritime ancestors have done for over 300 years, I began to rebuild our family homes after Katrina hit. But like others, I was told to tear it down what I built because it would not meet the new elevation code. *These codes, which alone cost over \$20,000, have forced working and middle class people in rural coastal Alabama to depend on federal assistance to rebuild -- which for most of us, has not come.*

So, like hundreds of others on the coast, my mother and disabled brother moved into one of the FEMA camper "temporary shelters". My wife and I moved into one behind them. Our family oyster processing plant had been leveled like our home, so we thought our *only* struggle was to find work and to rebuild. We learned later we were also struggling for our very own lives:

**We started testing in Alabama," explains Becky Gillette, co-chair of the Mississippi Sierra Club, because we got reports from social workers there that so many elderly people living in the trailers were being hospitalized for respiratory conditions. And many of them were dying.... at the age of 76, Hilda Nelson died, one year and one month after moving into her FEMA trailer. Doctors "never had an answer" as to why her health deteriorated so quickly, says her son. "But I have my suspicions. I point the finger at the formaldehyde." (["Dying for a Home", by Amanda Spake, The Nation, Feb. 15, 2007](#))**

The names and ages of south Mobile County's casualties were listed by South Bay Communities Alliance's late president Jim Fuller in the attached letter to the Senate leadership last summer. It reads:

**...South Bay Communities Alliance (SBCA) is a volunteer grass roots, multi-cultural organization in South Mobile County, AL. We organized in early 2006 when we became aware that especially the unincorporated areas of Alabama had been substantially overlooked and under-funded for Katrina**

disaster CDBG funding. The Senate hearing of September 25, 2007, publicly revealed life-threatening conditions of Alabama's rural victims.

SBCA Board Member, Paul Nelson states,

**“Codon has never seen so many people pass in such a short time. My neighbor Delaphine Barber, age 75 lost her home and died of heart attack about a year after Katrina. Other neighbors who died, trying to survive in the FEMA campers, and hoping to see their homes rebuilt were: Sally Dismukes, age 72, died of a heart attack; Tommy Barbour age 56, died of lung cancer; Michael Goleman, age 36 husband and father of two teenage daughters, suicide; Shirley Clark, age 65, complications following a staph infection; Randy Hall, age 45, lung cancer; Nancy Maples, age 57. Most have spouses or dependents who are still hoping to see family homes rebuilt. My mother, Hilda Nelson died after living in a FEMA camper over a year and hoping for assistance to rebuild the family home that never came...”**

Three more of us died during the holidays, including Jim Fuller, the first President of South Bay Communities Alliance. I have plotted them all next to their property, pictured on the attached Google Earth map, taken one year after Katrina.

Margaret Singleton, who has depended on a blue tarp since Katrina, in her often wet and cold trailer, died last month of respiratory failure.

Another recent victim, Mary Alice Lee, lived at the corner of Kennedy Road and Railroad Street for decades. All four homes and the barn on Kennedy Road were blown away by Katrina.

Mary Alice's son and daughter in law, Tommy and Faye Lee lived in a home halfway down the road. Their homeowners insurance refused to compensate them. They have been waiting on a Katrina CDBG for over two years; and have lived for several months in a shed so their three children, granddaughter and daughter in law could have more room in the FEMA camper. No longer able to tolerate these inhuman conditions, two of their teenage sons moved out, quit high school and went to work. An Op-Ed featuring their tragedy, and the inequitable distribution of Katrina relief in the state --- including quotes from a protest letter composed by the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law -- was printed during the summer of 2007 in three major Alabama Sunday papers. <http://www.alarise.org/PDF/Arise%20op%20ed%20re%20Katrina%20funding%2010-29-07.pdf>.

Tommy Lee invited Junior Sprinkle, his childhood buddy, to live on his mother's property. Mr. Sprinkle had to leave Bayou La Batre -- the home where he lived with his brother was torn down by the City of Bayou La Batre. He built a small shack near the ruins of Mary Alice Lee's home. Junior Sprinkle was found dead this past Christmas morning.

Recently, several of us tried to visit again with Mrs. Nguyen. We learned from a family friend that she is now in the hospital and very ill. Mrs. Nguyen's caseworker says her **“dying wish”** is for help **“... to repair the house for her daughter to live there after she's is gone because she wants to keep her house and the land together.”** Mrs. Nguyen is not under the Mobile County Katrina CDBG jurisdiction, so like untold hundreds of others must be added to Ms. McHugh's estimate.

Regarding my background, as I wrote in my testimony to Congressman Henry Waxman, Chair of **U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform's** Hearing Probing Toxic FEMA Trailers on July 19, 2007:

**I have been a lifetime resident of Codon, Alabama on Mobile County's Gulf Coast for over fifty years. Like my father and grandfather before me, I have been active in my community since early adulthood. For example, my father, brother, and I helped organize the oyster-catchers union in south Mobile County; and we have always been staunch defenders of the marine environment. See anthropologist E.**

Paul Durrenberger's book, **It's All Politics: South Alabama's Seafood Industry**, (University of Illinois Press, 1992).... I know personally of about 25 families [ since I wrote this testimony I've collected statements from some 300 people] with serious health issues that arose after living in these *temporary mobile homes* for almost two years...

### **Our Hopes Were Raised in November, Only to Sink Again in January**

We were encouraged by many aspects of your stirring campaign Mr. President, and especially so with regard to our desperate plight, when on September 18 you joined Senator Tom Harkin's request of the Senate Appropriations committee for disaster funding – *a request which included Alabama Katrina rebuilding assistance*.

But our hopes were set back once more when we learned that first the House, and then the Senate Appropriations Committee has cut *Alabama Katrina families rebuilding funding again*, despite Congressman Davis's November request to Speaker Pelosi; and despite the following letter sent to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees by a national coalition of advocates requesting vital funding *for all Gulf Coast storm victims* in the current stimulus package:

**The funding being requested for Alabama is critical to the rebuilding and recovery of a region still trying to get back to normalcy three years after Hurricane Katrina. Out of the Gulf Coast states, Alabama is the lone state not to have received additional appropriations in FY09 for Katrina aid...**" (Dec. 8, 2008 letter sent to the [Senate](#) and [House](#) leadership by the National Low Income Housing Coalition, [click here for copy posted at NLIHC website](#)).

A few weeks earlier, the **Katrina Housing Group**, which is convened by the **National Low Income Housing Coalition**, dedicated an entire letter primarily to those of us in Alabama still suffering from Katrina and the failure of government policies:

**...the Senate overwhelmingly voted [by a veto-proof margin of 75-22] for disaster-related funding for Alabama ...that was not included in the version signed into law. Senator Richard Shelby and Representative Jo Bonner have both made formal requests for \$110 million in CDBG funds for Alabama. Although the need for disaster aid is far greater than that total...The disaster of Katrina and Rita was extraordinary; sadly the failure of the recovery to rebuild the homes of the lowest income people even exceeds those disasters."** (10/28/08 letter to Senate Leadership from Katrina Housing Group, [click here for copy posted on NLIHC website](#)). [I elaborate below regarding the fact that Alabama's unmet Katrina need is far greater than \$110 million, including families like Mrs. Nguyen and her daughter whose severely damaged home is not included in this figure.]

The bi-partisan requests from Alabama Senator Shelby, Representative Jo Bonner, and Representative Artur Davis for \$110 million in CDBG Funds are based on the request of Bill Johnson on behalf of Alabama's Governor, at the May 8 2008 House Financial Subcommittee hearing entitled: **"Emergency CDBG Funds in the Gulf Coast: Uses, Challenges, and Lessons for the Future"**. Each of these requests, as well as Mr. Johnson's testimony, was the results of grass-roots activity. The Mobile County Katrina CDBG applications are "shovel ready", which we understand is a criteria for the stimulus package. Yet we are told there are those in Congress who oppose this modest request for Mobile County.

### **Trying to Understand Why Some Members of Congress Oppose Katrina Rebuilding Funds for Alabama**

As Congressman Davis states in his November letter to Speaker Pelosi, Mr. Johnson testified at this House hearing that: **"In Mobile County, approximately 1,020 qualify for assistance, however it is estimated that with existing funds, the county will be able to assist less than 300 households"**. Along with assistance for the approximately

**185 qualifying rental households, Mr. Johnson projected that “an additional \$100 million to \$110 million will enable the state of Alabama to adequately address its disaster recovery”.**

Yet we are told there are Members of Congress who reject the request for additional Alabama funding “*because so few of the Katrina CDBG Funds allocated to Mobile County have been spent*”.

I am at a loss trying to understand such reasoning -- I would like to ask them: **How can our government morally allow the other 720 families -- who Mr. Johnson said qualified for a Katrina CDBG -- to continue to languish without hope?** And, I would like to ask them: **What happened to government oversight of Alabama’s Katrina CDBG Funds? And, most importantly what can state, local, and federal government and volunteer agencies do *now* to help distribute assistance to the 1020 Alabama families who qualified for a Katrina CDBG?**

Incredibly, as Mr. Johnson testified for \$110 million in additional Katrina CDBG Funds in Alabama, it was pointed out, again at the same May 8 2008 House hearing, that he had not even contracted the \$8.5 million in second round Katrina CDBG Funds that had been allocated for Mobile County the previous summer.

<http://financialservices.house.gov/hearing110/baab.pdf>

And, as an appointed member of the [Mobile County Hurricane Katrina CDBG Assistance Program](#), which is intended to include community input regarding these funds, many of us, as well as Alabama Arise, have asked that these funds be put to use. We also recently voted unanimously to support our Alabama Congressmen, bi-partisan formal requests made for the additional \$110 million in Katrina CDBG Funds.

There are issues of accountability at the three levels of government: county, state, and the federal government: But certainly we can agree that the “least of these”, and working and middle class Katrina Victims, should not suffer the consequences.

Indeed, dozens of advocacy groups, for three years, from Alabama to New Orleans to Washington DC, have protested at all levels of government regarding the need for additional Katrina assistance in Alabama, *and the need for oversight* for over three years. Our campaign is documented in South Bay Communities Alliance petition letter to congressional leaders last September. It was co-signed by over 40 organizations including dozens of Alabama delegates who signed it at the National Democratic Convention. ([Click here for post by Alabama Arise](#)).

The **Gulf Coast Civic Works Act** could assure such oversight. And it could facilitate the participation of grass roots organizations in the distribution of disaster assistance, and even the formation of community cooperatives. I’ve recently met with both Bay Area Women Coalition of Mobile, and the Federation of Southern Cooperatives, who are both ready to enlist their years of experience to help HUD, the state of Alabama and Mobile County to get these funds on the ground. And there are probably other non-profits that may want to subcontract the proposed additional Katrina CDBG Funds.

### **Katrina Devastation and Lack of Federal Relief Has Wrecked Alabama’s Commercial Fisheries**

Adding to the housing distress in our maritime communities, a breach in our barrier island remains unrepaired. The resultant influx of highly saline Gulf water has devastated our commercial fisheries in the Alabama bays and our section of the Mississippi Sound -- especially our oyster reefs, some of the most prolific on the Gulf Coast. Thus, community elders like Lawrence and Rita Johnson of Heron Bay, who owned their oyster & crab processing shop and home outright since 1958, now face homelessness.

Lawrence and Rita Johnson’s home and shop were seriously damaged by Katrina. Like many others, their only available relief was an SBA loan. Their income is now wrecked -- like the oyster reefs that Lawrence Johnson helped seed with the state. They have asked the SBA to give them a meaningful deferment. Please read Rita Johnson’s attached letter.

The **Gulf Coast Civic Works Act** could provide for the repair of Dauphin Island and put our commercial fishermen, oystermen, and shrimpers, and “Pop & Mom” processors back to work.

### **Failure to Document Alabama’s Unmet Katrina Needs Veils the Scope of Alabama Tragedy**

I would like to elaborate regarding the fact that Alabama’s unmet needs are “far greater than” the \$110 million, as the Katrina Housing Group wrote last October. **Alabama Arise** -- since September 2007-- has advocated for a comprehensive unmet Katrina needs assessment in south Alabama. And **Alabama Appleaseed** offered uncontroverted testimony supporting this just demand during the May 8, 2008 congressional hearing.

And as has been noted, Mr. Bill Johnson, testified at this House hearing that: **“In Mobile County, approximately 1,020 qualify for assistance...”** However, there are many others beyond the “1,020” who qualified for assistance. For example, Mobile County Commissioner Mike Dean and his Katrina CDBG administrator Kathy McHugh, South Bay Communities Alliance, Alabama Arise, and Fair Housing of Mobile wrote Senator Shelby in July 2007: **“...In addition to the current 1,200 CDBG applicants, there are likely hundreds of others who did not make the deadline for the CDBG applications that were distributed in January 2007.”** ([Click here for copy posted by Alabama Arise](#)).

### **Recent Grass Roots Survey of Alabama’s Coastal Maritime Villages**

Thanks to a loan by Dale Williams, a Coden shipyard owner, South Bay Communities Alliance recently completed a survey of the small zipcode area that we represent – only 34 square miles and about 3500 people. [[click, scroll for map](#)]. Over 70 families responded that they had 100% - 75% damage and have received little to no assistance. Another 40 reported 50% damage and little assistance. Overall, about 150 families reported significant unmet needs, and many of them missed the opportunity to apply for a Katrina CDBG.

We attach these surveys for your inspection Mr. President. They have previously been forwarded to: Senator Richard Shelby; Representatives Artur Davis and Jo Bonner; Governor Bob Riley; the National Low Income Housing Coalition, Fair Housing Alliance, and Alabama Arise. South Bay is an all volunteer staff of Katrina Victims. We are trying to do follow up interviews of each of these survey respondents, as we also gather testimony from Katrina Victims throughout Mobile County, like Mrs. Ngieu Nguyen and Becky Barbour of Bayou La Batre.

### **“South Mobile County, Alabama, communities...should be evaluated for Environmental Justice concerns”**

Closely tied to accountability issues in Alabama is the need for environmental protection for coastal residents. Incredulously, \$24 million of the state of Alabama’s Katrina CDBG Funds (about 25% of our total) have been allocated to the construction of a condo-friendly waste treatment plant to be built by the City of Bayou La Batre in unincorporated and multicultural Coden. A recent article in the Mobile Press reported:

**Officials with the environmental watchdog group Mobile Bay Keeper have said the proposed plant's location was chosen using outdated flood zone maps, which could make the plant vulnerable to strong storm surges. Casi Callaway, executive director of Mobile Bay Keeper, said... "This is a dangerous place to put a sewage-treatment facility," Callaway said, adding that the issue is a matter of public health.** ([click here for article](#))

### **‘Failure to rebuild the homes of the lowest income people’ in South Mobile County Benefits Only Developers**

Too little has changed since Alabama Arise and South Bay Communities Alliance we wrote our first press release regarding Fair Katrina Relief over two years ago:

**FEMA Evictions Delayed, Concerns Remain**

*Displaced residents, advocacy groups question fairness of Katrina relief and highlight related environmental issues*

BAYOU LA BATRE, AL – Nearly 2,000 Hurricane Katrina survivors in south Mobile County won 6 more months of borrowed time on Friday when President Bush pushed back a February 28 end date for FEMA trailer and rental assistance. ... A year and a half after the storm, an estimated 700 area households remain in FEMA trailers and tiny campers because federal Community Development Block Grants designated for home rebuilding have not yet been released.

**Displaced Coden residents and representatives of social justice and environmental advocacy groups will hold a news conference on the fairness of Katrina relief policies at 2:00 today at Mobile City Hall.**

Also at issue will be the new Bayou La Batre waste treatment plant, slated for construction in neighboring Coden, in a minority community within a federally designated flood zone. .... An environmentally sound alternative proposal by the Mobile Area Water and Sewer System remains under consideration by state and local authorities.

The utility project is just one piece of a larger coastal development picture that worries many locals, including ... “After the storm, my husband and I and nine other family members had to live on a shrimp boat for about a month,” Nelson says. “The first day we got back, we noticed there were flyers from developer Tim James’s company all over peoples’ houses, trailers, and even pilings of blown-away houses. The flyers asked if people wanted to sell. What the flyers should have said was How can we help?”

When Nelson called the number on the flyer and spoke to James, he offered to buy her family’s several acres for \$20,000. “That property’s been in our family for over 100 years,” Nelson says. “I told him we were not for sale.”

The people of south Mobile County are the backbone of Alabama’s vital seafood industry, the natural stewards of our marine environment. They have served as a model of multicultural tolerance for centuries. The Creole family the Allens were educators who often hosted B T Washington on his trips from Tuskegee (see for example, <http://www.historycooperative.org/btw/Vol.13/html/366.html>) The anthropologist quoted in our letterhead wrote: “**French traditions dominated the culture for more than two centuries and are still a strong defining characteristic, distinguishing this portion of the Alabama and the Louisiana Gulf Coast from the rest of the United States.**” Our state, our country cannot afford to see them displaced from their ancestral maritime communities.

We also reach out in unity with our neighbors and friends some 40 miles north; in Prichard, Magazine, and Plateau who have also suffered from Katrina. We cannot afford to those their rich African American heritage and contribution to our society. And the City of Mobile itself, the first capital of Louisiana has a rich and multicultural history.

We have a Katrina CDBG program that has been in place for almost two years and is finally making progress with repairs and rebuilding. How can our society morally afford to no longer fund it and break a promise to hundreds of families. \$110 million is a modest request. But it would put good people back in their homes, put a lot of people to work. And the economic multiplier effect would be a significant stimulus to Alabama’s economy.

I ask Mr. President, to please consider Congressman Davis’s request. Please consider our clear facts and testimonials. Please use your persuasive powers to convince the Senate and House leadership during the

conference committee meetings this week to include \$110 million in additional Katrina rebuilding CDBG Funds in your economic recovery package.

The Mobile County Commission gave Judy Buff a, [resolution honoring Jim Fuller's advocacy](#) to bring fair Katrina assistance to our unincorporated towns. Judy and Jim were married for 29 years. Colonel Roosevelt Lewis, whose family is a pillar of the Coden community and a founder of the Tuskegee Airmen Museum, read the resolution as Jim's obituary. [The local CBS TV affiliate covered his memorial](#), and the [Mobile Press paid homage](#).

I pray for my community that Jim Fuller's Katrina advocacy work may not be in vain. I pray that no one else has to face death without hope for a rebuilt home for their family. I pray for your strong leadership of our country.

Sincerely,

Paul Nelson, President  
South Bay Communities Alliance  
251/442-5213  
Coden, Alabama