

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

December 3, 2008

The Honorable President George W. Bush  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush:

We write to you on an issue of vital importance to recovery to one of the hardest hit Louisiana parishes by Hurricanes Gustav and Ike. As you may know, Cameron Parish is a mostly rural parish in Southwest Louisiana. While the parish is largely rural, with a total area of 1,932 square miles, it is also the largest parish in the State of Louisiana in terms of land area. Cameron Parish residents are in desperate need of temporary housing as the parish had few rental resources before the storms and the major industries in the area - oil/gas and seafood - necessitate a nearby workforce. However, the efforts of Federal, State and local officials to house storm victims are being severely hampered by an Executive Order from the 1970's.

In particular, efforts to house Cameron Parish residents in mobile homes offered through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Individual and Households Program's direct assistance grants is prohibited by Executive Order 11-9-88 issued in 1977. This Executive Order prohibits Federal funds from being expended to completely rebuild a severely damaged facility or to set up temporary mobile homes in an area determined to be in a "high velocity flood zone" (V-Zone). This is an area which faces significant risk in the event of wave action or flooding. For Cameron Parish, flood maps made in 2005 and adopted by state and local officials, placed 30 percent of Cameron Parish in the V-Zone. However, recently updated Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps, which have been proposed but not adopted by local governments, have placed 83 percent of the parish in the V-Zone. We believe that a strict application of this Executive Order is blocking needed humanitarian assistance from reaching these disaster victims along with severely impacting the local economy.

While we understand that the Federal Emergency Management Agency is willing to set up community sites in the parish and provide transportation assistance for some residents, this solution will not fully address the problem in Cameron Parish. As mentioned above, the parish spans 1,932 square miles and for employees in the seafood and oil/gas industries, bus transportation is simply not effective - especially for shift workers. Furthermore, not allowing homeowners to reside near their properties and employment could impact the local economy and also discourage individual mitigation efforts.

Therefore, we would respectfully request that you provide a limited waiver from Executive Order 11-9-88 for Gustav/Ike recovery efforts in Cameron Parish until June 1, 2009 under the following conditions:

- In lieu of DFIRM, the State of Louisiana will utilize approved Advisory Based Flood Elevation maps until June 1, 2009
- State of Louisiana will negotiate with FEMA on the terms of temporary housing placed in DFIRM areas and on costs for removing units before June 1, 2009

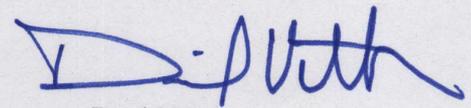
This proposal will ensure that the Federal government follows the intent of the Executive Order, provide the local government sufficient time to adopt new DFIRMs, and most importantly, help residents in desperate need of temporary housing.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

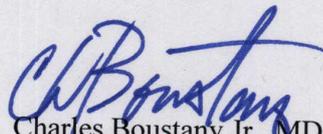
Sincerely,



Mary L. Landrieu  
United States Senator



David Vitter  
United States Senator



Charles Boustany Jr., MD  
Member of Congress