

RESOLUTION

NO. R-08-618

CITY HALL: November 20, 2008

BY: COUNCILMEMBER FIELKOW AND MIDURA

WHEREAS, during the Great Depression, New Deal initiatives including the Work Projects Administration (WPA), the Public Works Administration (PWA), and the Civilian Conservation Corps gainfully employed workers that built or repaired 103 golf courses, 800 state parks, 1,000 airports, 2,500 hospitals, 2,500 sports stadiums, 8,192 parks, 11,338 schools, 12,800 playgrounds, 124,031 bridges, 125,110 public buildings and 651,087 miles of highways and roads; hired 238 bands and orchestras; arrested 20 million acres of soil erosion, stocked one billion fish in lakes and rivers, and planted three billion trees; and

WHEREAS, the benefits of the WPA projects are still seen in New Orleans through such city fixtures as Charity Hospital, the New Orleans Public Library in Bywater; the botanical garden at City Park; the Cabildo; Napoleon House; the Seventh Street Wharf; and the Audubon Zoo; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita damaged and destroyed over 200,000 Gulf Coast homes, and damaged or destroyed schools, hospitals, police and fire stations, roads, community centers, bridges, parks, and forest land, and left over 100,000 individuals in Louisiana and across the Gulf Coast unemployed; and

WHEREAS, the extensive damage caused by Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and subsequent damage caused by this year Hurricane Gustav underscore the need for environmental reform, including greener building practices, more efficient energy consumption, and a commitment to coastal conservation and restoration; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding the federal government's response to this unprecedented disaster, New Orleans continues the difficult work of restoring our core infrastructure so that residents can return and enjoy the unique character of the City, and so that businesses can function effectively and continue to produce goods and services vital to the national economy; and

WHEREAS, HR 4048: the Gulf Coast Civic Works Act will ensure that real progress is made toward rebuilding and sustaining the Gulf Coast region through the establishment of a federal authority to fund resident-led recovery projects; the creation of 100,000 good jobs and training opportunities for local, displaced workers to rebuild infrastructure and restore the environment; empowering residents to realize their right to return with dignity and safety, revitalizing the local workforce, and helping create more sustainable communities and a better quality of life for residents and businesses in the Gulf Coast region; and

WHEREAS, HR 4048: the Gulf Coast Civic Works Act would rebuild vital public infrastructure and restore the environment, by specifically:

- Rebuilding and repairing public infrastructure including schools, police and fire stations, hospitals, parks, roads, water and sewer systems, and cultural centers;
- Building equitable flood protection and restoring marshes and wetlands;
- Serving as a national model for disaster recovery and infrastructure development; and

WHEREAS, HR 4048: the Gulf Coast Civic Works Act would create jobs and provide job training, specifically:

- Create a minimum of 100,000 jobs and training opportunities for Gulf Coast residents;
- Create a Civilian Conservation Corp for youth 17-24 to focus on wetland restoration, forestation and urban greenery;
- Provide 15 grants for artistic projects to highlight Gulf Coast culture and history; and

WHEREAS, HR 4048: the Gulf Coast Civic Works Act would jumpstart the economy, specifically:

- Establish the Gulf Coast Recovery Authority to implement and coordinate the necessary federal response to the devastation of the Gulf Coast;
- Coordinate existing federal programs to ensure effective and efficient recovery;
- Create opportunities for local business through competitive contract bidding; and

WHEREAS, HR 4048: the Gulf Coast Civic Works Act would spur sustainable community development, specifically:

- Through the creation of local advisory councils, allow community groups and officials to determine what projects are needed;
- Focus benefits on the regional economy through first source hiring provisions;
- Strengthen the workforce by providing jobs and needed skills training and;

WHEREAS, HR 4048: the Gulf Coast Civic Works Act requires accountability, specifically, oversight and community participation in all recovery projects; and

WHEREAS, the severe devastation resulting from the impacts of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav and Ike are national tragedies that require the attention and consideration of every American, regardless of party affiliation or state residence; and

WHEREAS, on November 14-16th the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice at Dillard University and the Gulf Coast Civic Works Project hosted "Rebuild the Gulf Coast, Rebuild America"; a conference attended by 63 students from 25 universities and 16 states to develop a strategy for the passage of HR 4048 within the first 100 days of the new Administration and the convening of the 111th U.S. Congress,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS, that it hereby expresses its support of efforts toward passage of HR 4048: the Gulf Coast Civic Works Act, which would coordinate recovery projects, rebuild key infrastructure and ensure sustainable community development.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council hereby reaffirms its commitment to working closely with local community groups, the Office of the Governor of Louisiana, our state and federal legislators, the U.S. Representatives House Committee on Education and Labor and the Office of the President of the United States to further strengthen and enact this legislation as it moves through the Congress.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Clerk forward a certified copy of this resolution to The Honorable C. Ray Nagin, Mayor of the City of New Orleans, Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal, the New Orleans delegation to the Louisiana Legislature, the Louisiana delegation to the U.S. House of Representatives, United States Senators Mary Landrieu and David Vitter, the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor and the Office of the President-Elect of the United States.

THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION WAS READ IN FULL, THE ROLL WAS CALLED ON THE ADOPTION THEREOF AND RESULTED AS FOLLOWS:

YEAS:

NAYS:

ABSENT:

AND THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED