

By: Representatives Fredericks, Dickson

To: Sel Cmte on Hurricane
Recovery

HOUSE BILL NO. 1341

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON HURRICANE
2 KATRINA RESPONSE AND RECOVERY; TO PROVIDE FOR THE DUTIES OF THE
3 COMMITTEE; TO REQUIRE THE COMMITTEE TO MAKE REPORTS TO THE
4 LEGISLATURE; TO PROVIDE THAT THE MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
5 SHALL PROVIDE TO THE COMMITTEE CERTAIN INFORMATION PERTAINING TO
6 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUNDS PROVIDED TO THE STATE; AND
7 FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

9 **SECTION 1.** (1) The Legislature finds that Hurricane Katrina
10 was the worst natural disaster in the state's history. Extensive
11 and prolonged damage caused by the storm has been devastating to
12 infrastructure and to the civil, social, economic and
13 environmental well-being of Mississippi. The entire economic base
14 of Mississippi was undermined, including the ability of
15 individuals to earn an income to support themselves and their
16 families. A loss of this magnitude affects all Mississippians.
17 Extraordinary assistance to the affected areas is required if this
18 region and, indeed, the entire state is to recover from the short-
19 and long-term effects of the devastation.

20 (2) The Legislature further finds that the devastation
21 caused by Hurricane Katrina was of unprecedented proportions.
22 Devastation of this magnitude was not planned for and could not
23 have been planned for. No policies, no decision making, and no
24 planning could adequately mitigate damage from or prepare an
25 adequate response to such an extraordinary event. However,
26 learning from this tragic event, the Legislature finds that
27 long-term planning for future natural disasters is appropriate.

28 (3) The Legislature further finds that the devastation
29 caused by Hurricane Katrina in Mississippi continues to affect all

30 aspects of the economy, the environment, public health and safety,
31 infrastructure, public and private institutions, and the general
32 welfare of the region and, indirectly, of the entire state.
33 Immediate short-term responses and long-term responses are
34 necessary to preserve a way of life in Mississippi, to preserve
35 the economic condition of the entire state, and to preserve the
36 reputation Mississippi has, nationally and internationally, as a
37 great place to live and a great place to do business.

38 **SECTION 2.** (1) There is created the Joint Legislative
39 Committee on Hurricane Katrina Response and Recovery. The
40 committee shall consist of seven (7) members of the House of
41 Representatives appointed by the Speaker of the House, one (1)
42 from each congressional district and three (3) from the state at
43 large, and seven (7) members of the Senate appointed by the
44 Lieutenant Governor, one (1) from each congressional district and
45 three (3) from the state at large.

46 All members shall be entitled to per diem and expenses,
47 except in such cases where the committee meets when the
48 Legislature is in session. The Speaker of the House and the
49 Lieutenant Governor shall each designate a member to serve as
50 cochair of the committee. The cochairs shall be responsible for
51 calling the first meeting of the committee no later than June 1,
52 2007.

53 The committee may organize itself into subcommittees as
54 deemed necessary by the cochairs. The proceedings of the
55 committee shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order on all
56 matters of parliamentary procedure. The committee may adopt any
57 additional rules it determines are necessary to carry out the
58 purposes of this act.

59 (2) The committee shall have the power to:

60 (a) Require that all agencies of state and local
61 government report to the committee on any matters the committee
62 deems relevant to the state's recovery from Hurricane Katrina;

63 (b) Consider ways by which the state may ensure
64 effective and efficient recovery from the ravages of the storm and
65 to consider ways by which the state may mitigate future losses
66 from storms and other natural disasters;

67 (c) Require that any agency of state government shall
68 submit copies of any state plans that it will be tendering to any
69 agency of the United States government as a precondition to the
70 receipt of any funds for hurricane recovery for review and comment
71 by the committee; and

72 (d) Compel the production of any paper, file, record,
73 document, or electronically produced or stored data files from any
74 agency of state or local government related in whole or in part to
75 hurricane recovery.

76 (3) The committee may require assistance from any state
77 agency, local governing authority, or any committee of the
78 Legislature in carrying out the purposes of this act.

79 (4) The committee shall annually report to the Legislature
80 no later than December 31, of each year on any findings or
81 recommendations it may have regarding the recovery process,
82 additional needs of storm-damaged areas, and generally any other
83 matter pertinent to recovery from the storm and the prevention and
84 mitigation of damages from future storms and natural disasters.

85 **SECTION 3.** For the purpose of making the Joint Legislative
86 Committee on Hurricane Katrina Response and Recovery aware of the
87 distribution of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds
88 that are to be, or that have been, provided to the State of
89 Mississippi for assistance to homeowners whose homes were damaged
90 or destroyed by Hurricane Katrina, the Mississippi Development
91 Authority (MDA) shall provide the committee with the information
92 specified in this section for each grant of CDBG funds to a
93 homeowner whose home was damaged or destroyed by Hurricane
94 Katrina, MDA shall provide the committee with:

95 (a) The address of the house to be repaired or rebuilt
96 with the grant;

97 (b) The amount of the grant disbursed by address;

98 (c) The use of the grant (repair or rebuild) by
99 address;

100 (d) The total number of grant recipients; and

101 (e) The total amount of grants disbursed.

102 However, no other personal information pertaining to a grant
103 recipient may be divulged by MDA to the committee or to any
104 person, agency or entity, including the Federal Emergency
105 Management Agency and the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency.
106 Any information obtained by MDA with regard to CDBG funds provided
107 to a homeowner, other than the information specified in this
108 section, shall be exempt from the Mississippi Public Records Act,
109 Section 25-61-1 et seq.

110 **SECTION 4.** This act shall stand repealed from and after
111 January 1, 2010.

112 **SECTION 5.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
113 and after its passage.