



The United States Conference of Mayors

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For Immediate Release:
Thursday, September 5, 2008

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U.S. MAYORS SAY MEDIA IS IGNORING BATON ROUGE: CITIZENS IN BATON ROUGE STILL IN DESPERATE NEED

MAYORS HELPING MAYORS IN THE ABSENCE OF FEMA

St. Paul, Minnesota – Since Hurricane Gustav hit the Gulf Coast, Baton Rouge has experienced the worst hurricane in its history. Immediately following the storm's impact, The U.S. Conference of Mayors President Miami Mayor Manny Diaz and USCM Executive Director and CEO Tom Cochran established a hurricane command center and have been in constant contact with the mayors of the Gulf Region and cities throughout the nation.

Below is a joint statement from President Diaz, Executive Director Cochran, and Baton Rouge Mayor Kip Holden:

"While the nation focuses on Minneapolis and St. Paul, it is our position that we should not ignore Baton Rouge in this hour of desperate need. Because Baton Rouge was never given the order to relocate, the citizens of Baton Rouge are still bearing the brunt of the storm. Yesterday, in a city of 500,000, approximately 300,000 residents in Baton Rouge were still without power, shelter, food and basic necessities. These people are also in dire need of equipment from FEMA and assistance from the federal government to help them reenter their homes.

"For the last 48 hours, the nation's mayors have been frustrated with FEMA's lack of movement of tarps, many of which are already available in cities and states nearby. These tarps are needed to cover the roofs of thousands of homes.

"Mayor Kip Holden confirmed that although FEMA has provided some assistance to Baton Rouge, the demand from citizens for relief has far exceed the quantities of supplies provided by FEMA. In the meantime, other mayors, agencies and the private sector have responded by providing critical supplies and equipment.

"Yesterday Baton Rouge faced an emergency situation without power for hundreds of thousands of its residents.

"The nation's mayors are calling on the national news media not to lose sight of this tragic and dangerous situation. Throughout history, the media has been with the people reporting the facts. While there are other events going on around the nation, mayors around the country believe that it is very important that the cameras be turned to Baton Rouge to help those in immediate need."

For a list of items still desperately needed by the residents of Baton Rouge, please go to www.usmayors.org.