

Forgetting the Pledge to New Orleans

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The Jan. 29 editorial "New Orleans Betrayed" noted that the White House, which promised to do whatever it takes to rebuild New Orleans, does not support the bill introduced by Rep. Richard H. Baker (R-La.) to intelligently do just that. H.R. 4100 would establish the Louisiana Recovery Corp. to provide for the economic stabilization and redevelopment of those areas of Louisiana that were devastated by Hurricane Katrina. The Bush administration's decision comes on the heels of the bill's favorable reception by the House Financial Services Committee.

The American Institute of Architects is committed to helping the Gulf Coast recover from this disaster, and on Thursday, more than 700 of its members will visit Capitol Hill to urge Congress to pass H.R. 4100 and its Senate companion, S. 2172.

Without a unifying federal entity to purchase, clean up and package land for redevelopment, property owners will be subject to existing mortgages without being able to live in or otherwise use their properties. Neither will it be possible to compensate owners of properties that cannot be rebuilt for their losses and set that land aside for use as park land or buffer land.

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