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# Leveraging Disaster: Promoting Social Justice and Holistic Recovery through Policy Advocacy after Hurricane Katrina

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*After disasters, the recovery process is uneven, and often, the social vulnerability of populations before a disaster translates into a lack of access to political power after the event. This study proposes that a large-scale event presents an opportunity to overcome these challenges and improve social, economic, political, and environmental conditions for affected communities during the recovery process by involving advocates for traditionally marginalized community members in the recovery. Using textual analysis to code the testimony of 240 witnesses who testified in 41 congressional hearings held after Hurricane Katrina, witnesses who advocated for policies that addressed social inequities are identified and their proposals analyzed. Advocacy groups were well represented, comprising nearly 27 percent of the total witnesses at the congressional hearings, and addressed race, class, poverty, and the environment in recovery proposals. The proposals reflected a holistic recovery approach, incorporating ideas of sustainability, resilience, and considerations of social equity.*

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Despite long standing calls from disaster researchers and practitioners for governmental policies to emphasize disaster mitigation and risk reduction programs, the United States Congress continues to favor funding recovery efforts after disasters strike, rather than allocating resources to fund mitigation and prevention programs. This is unsurprising given the nature of legislative politics, where reelection concerns dominate legislators' decision-making calculus (Mayhew 2004). Disaster mitigation and preparedness policies are low salience 'policies without publics' (May 1985), where technical experts and legislative specialists dominate disaster policymaking between disaster events. Disasters receive little attention from the public or policymakers until they occur (Birkland 1997 and 2006).

The public and political attention to the recovery phase necessitates a need to understand the disaster recovery process, since fundamental long-term decisions about large geographic regions and numbers of people, involving tremendous sums of public money are made during this period<sup>1</sup>. Yet, somewhat surprisingly, disaster recovery remains the most understudied areas in disaster research (Berke, Karetz, and Wenger 1993; Rubin 2009; Smith and Wenger 2007). Much of the recovery process is driven by decisions made in the initial phases of the recovery, yet little is known about the decision-making processes that occur during this period (Smith and Wenger 2007).

Recovery after disaster provides an opportunity to improve the social, economic, political, and environmental conditions that existed before the disaster occurred. However, the recovery process is uneven, and often, the social vulnerability of populations before a disaster occurs translates into a lack of access to political power after a disaster (Smith and Wenger 2007). A large scale disaster creates a unique opportunity to overcome these obstacles by providing an avenue for traditionally marginalized community members and stakeholders to participate in a meaningful way in the recovery planning (Baumgartner and Jones, 1993; Kingdon 1995; Birkland 1997).

A particularly important aspect of disaster recovery is the initial policy discussion at the federal level. Unlike smaller events, which raise a narrower range of issues, large disasters and crises receive greater amounts of attention, and are therefore likely to prompt discussion of a broader range of issues (Birkland 2006; Kurtz 2004). Hurricane Katrina elucidated the existing inequities in the areas affected by the disaster, and provided an opportunity to address

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<sup>1</sup> Taxpayer dollars spent for U.S. disasters are routinely exceeding a billion dollars per event. In 2012, there were 11 weather events costing at least one billion dollars (Dolce 2012). The federal government spent about \$150 billion on relief efforts after Hurricane Katrina, and has so far committed about \$60 billion for Storm Sandy. Experts estimate that the federal government will spend about \$50 billion a year (in constant dollars) on natural disasters (Conrad and Thomas, 2013).

these issues during recovery. This study analyzes initial recovery policy discussions raised by witnesses who testified in congressional hearings held after Hurricane Katrina. Congressional level analysis allows for the identification of who is being included in the policy discussions during the initial recovery planning at the federal level. This is particularly relevant since many of the recovery issues involved federal agencies and federal funding.

### **Disaster Recovery**

As disaster recovery scholars have noted, recovery scholarship is understudied, and lacks theory to guide researchers studying the recovery process (Alesch 2005; Chang 2005; Smith and Wenger 2007; Olshansky and Chang 2009; Olshansky, Hopkins, and Johnson 2012). Early disaster recovery studies emphasized the rebuilding of infrastructure and restoring the affected regions to their pre-disaster states after the initial crisis and response period. However, current conventional wisdom is that recovery is more aptly understood broadly, as “the differential process of restoring, rebuilding, and reshaping the physical, social, economic, and natural environment through pre-event planning and post-event action” (Smith and Wenger 2007). Three themes that should be integrated into any discussions, planning, or research agenda about disaster recovery include integration and consideration of vulnerable populations, mitigation measures, and environmental sustainability as part of the rebuilding plans (Phillips 2009).

Recovery is not driven by technical measures, but by social considerations. Likewise, it requires early and continuous participation of all relevant stakeholders, which has been found to increase stakeholders’ commitments to recovery plans. It includes a process that all affected stakeholders, not only powerful elites, are involved in planning their community’s recovery process (Berke and Campanella 2006). As such, it is important to involve traditionally marginalized participants and stakeholders in the recovery process, yet little is known about how this happens in practice after disasters.

#### *Disaster Recovery as an Opportunity for Political and Social Change*

Time compression occurs after disasters, where a drastic increase in demand for capital services creates opportunities for change that are prohibitively costly or politically unfeasible during routine times (Olshansky, Hopkins and Johnson 2012). For example, it was too costly to relocate an entire community out of a flood plain until the 1993 Midwestern created the need to rebuild the community after the flood. Time compression creates substantial challenges in recovery, but it also offers unique opportunities for change.

Another opportunity for change during disaster recovery is through the political opportunity disasters create, where advocates use the event to bring attention to policy failures and argue for changes. The policy literature describes events such as crises or disasters as potential catalysts for drastic and rapid policy changes (Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Birkland 1997, 1998, 2006; Cobb and Elder 1983; Kingdon 1995; Light 1982; Wilson 2000). These events are important because they capture the attention of policymakers, when, particularly in less salient policy domains such as disaster policy, a major event is often necessary to gain the attention of policymakers (Cobb and Elder 1983).

A disaster provides an opportunity for traditionally marginalized participants to gain access to policymakers and advocate for policy proposals. According to Birkland: “Groups that have traditionally struggled to gain a hearing or see their preferences translated into policy... can use focusing events to gain agenda access” (1997, 33). Groups can use the event to symbolize problems with existing policies. Beyond efforts to exploit symbols of failed policies derived from the event, “a major event occupies agenda space that can neither be ignored by the attentive public nor be contained by established members of the policy community” (1997, 34).

#### *Holistic Disaster Recovery*

The concept of a holistic approach to disaster recovery is relatively recent in the disaster literature. Holistic recovery incorporates ideas of sustainability and resilience, with the goal of rebuilding communities in ways that preserve and enhance the environment, and ensuring that all community members have an equitable recovery, and consideration of social equity for future generations (Phillips 2009). A holistic approach includes equity considerations across a multitude of recovery processes, including rebuilding infrastructure (e.g. transportation, public facilities, utilities, housing, the physical environment), economic and employment disruptions, health and safety, and culture and social connections in families and communities (Natural Hazards Review 2001). Successful incorporation of a holistic framework begins with proposing recovery plans that incorporate these principles at the outset. Although it does not ensure that these principles will be implemented in recovery, the principles must gain serious attention in the initial discussions if there is any chance that they will become part of the disaster recovery framework.

Social inequities are exacerbated after a disaster occurs (Mileti 1999; Peacock, Morrow, and Gladwin 2000; Tatsuki and Hayashi 2002; National Academy of Sciences 2006; Tierney 2007). Disaster scholars have begun to focus attention on the concept of social vulnerability, defined as “...partially a product of social inequalities—those social factors and forces that create the susceptibility of various groups to harm, and in turn affect their ability to respond,

and bounce back (resilience) after the disaster. But it is much more than that. Social vulnerability involves the basic provision of health care, the livability of places, overall indicators of quality of life, and accessibility to lifelines (goods, services, emergency response personnel), capital, and political representation.” (Cutter 2006). Social vulnerability increases the adverse effects that groups experience from disasters, and these groups are often marginalized from the political process.

This research analyzes the role of advocates in the congressional hearings held after Hurricane Katrina, using the following research questions to guide the analysis:

- RQ<sub>1</sub> Did advocates for traditionally marginalized groups participate in the congressional hearings held after Hurricane Katrina?
- RQ<sub>2</sub> How did advocates leverage the opportunities presented by Hurricane Katrina to address the recovery needs of traditionally marginalized groups?
- RQ<sub>3</sub> In what ways did advocates incorporate a holistic approach to disaster recovery in their testimony?

## Methods

This study uses textual analysis to identify and analyze the recovery policy proposals that witnesses advocate for in the hearings held in the initial recovery period after Hurricane Katrina. Congress, by institutional design, functions as the primary institution to fund disaster recovery. Although recovery plans are implemented in conjunction with the state and local level agencies and organizations, federal funding decisions are made at the congressional level. The witnesses who testify at congressional hearings and the issues they raise are fundamentally important in the initial stages of the recovery process. Congress is the institution that responds to catastrophic events. Members are accountable to their constituents; they want constituents to perceive them as responsive to governmental problems (Birkland 2006).

The dataset includes the testimony of 240 witnesses from 41 U.S. House and Senate hearings held after Hurricane Katrina, from September 1, 2005 through February 28, 2006. This is the period where the majority of the decisions about congressional funding priorities for recovery plans were considered. Subsequent hearings primarily addressed recovery progress, oversight issues, and obstacles encountered during the recovery process, but initial recovery issues had already been established at the six month mark. This is typical after a disaster, where the majority of institutional policy response is completed within six months after the event (Birkland 1997).

The Congressional hearings were obtained from the Government Printing Office, available online at <http://www.gpo.gov><sup>2</sup>. Congressional hearings are particularly well suited documents for this type of analysis. As an institution with a largely oral tradition, members of Congress gather information that informs their policymaking decisions through hearing testimony, talking to constituents, fellow members, lobbyists and staff members (Weiss 1989).

The testimony of the witnesses was coded according to the witnesses’ type of organization or affiliation. The witness affiliation categories were academic organization, government organization, private organization, not for profit organization, think tank, and private citizen. Because one goal of this research is to identify whether witnesses advocated for traditionally marginalized groups in the initial recovery policy discussions after Hurricane Katrina, witnesses who represented traditionally marginalized groups, as well as the citizens from the affected communities were of primary interest in this study. These witnesses were identified and coded as ‘private citizen’, or ‘not-for-profit advocacy’. Private citizens were from the affected communities, and were not affiliated with any organization. They were representing themselves in their testimony. The ‘not-for-profit’ advocacy organizations included faith-based organizations and churches, public interest groups, advocacy groups, and community groups.

After coding the affiliation of each witness, hearing testimony was coded according to the type of recovery proposals they advocated, and grouped into five general subject categories. According to the issues they advocated for on behalf of traditionally marginalized groups: environmental issues, issues of race and the legacy of racism in affected communities, class and poverty, affordable and safe housing recovery plans, and gender and women’s issues. The coding was completed using the qualitative data analysis software (QDAS) program Atlas.ti.<sup>3</sup> A complete list

<sup>2</sup> Appropriations hearings were excluded because they tend to be routine, and primarily about funding issues rather than providing a forum for witnesses to raise new policy issues. In addition, hearings that referred to Hurricane Katrina, but were primarily about other issues were also eliminated.

<sup>3</sup> Social science researchers are increasingly employing qualitative data analysis software (QDAS) to conduct research (Hwang 2008). In disaster research, the use of qualitative software is important for building protocols for textual and other qualitative data that are amenable to replication (National Research Council 2006). In addition, it

of the congressional hearings used in this dataset is available in Appendix A, and the names and affiliations of each of the 240 witnesses is available in Appendix B.

### Analysis and Discussion

Analysis of the witness testimony revealed that less than half of the witnesses who testified, (48%), represented a private organization. This category includes private corporations, lobby groups, and trade associations. Nearly 27% of the witnesses (64 of 240) who testified in the hearings represented not for profit advocacy groups. In addition, eight private citizens affected by the disaster testified, or 3.3%. Private citizens recounted their experiences and took a decidedly critical tone towards the government's preparation for and response to the disaster, and voiced serious concerns about how the recovery process might proceed. Few private citizens testified at the hearings, but their testimony garnered significant media coverage, and included celebrities such as New Orleans musicians Wynton Marsalis and Harry Connick Jr.

Table 1. Witness Participation in Hearings by Affiliation

<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Total Number of Witnesses</b>	<b>% of Total Witnesses Testifying at Hearings</b>
Academic Organization	25	10.4
Government Organization	21	8.8
Not-for-profit Advocacy	64	26.7
Private Citizen	8	3.3
Private Organization	116	48.3
Think Tank	6	2.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>100</b>

Although 27% does not constitute a majority of the witnesses who testified in the congressional hearings, this number is significant considering that post event hearings are typically dominated by government agency heads and congressional constituents seeking to secure funding for disaster relief efforts in distributive, pork-barrel politics fashion (Birkland 1997). Disaster policies are low salience 'policies without publics' (May 1985). Usually technical experts and legislative specialists dominate disaster policymaking, except when a particular disaster focuses attention on it (Birkland 2006). This is due, in large part, to the complexity of disaster policy issues.

The not-for-profit advocates and private citizens successfully addressed contentious social, political, and environmental issues that are typically neglected during the disaster recovery period. Furthermore, witnesses advocated for recovery policies that include the needs and concerns of traditionally marginalized groups. In the following sections, examples from witnesses' testimony illustrate the advocacy and the commitment to social justice exhibited in the hearings.

#### *Environmental Issues*

Witnesses representing environmental groups advocated for recovery policies that incorporated environmental concerns that had long been neglected in the region, and in many cases contributed to the severity of the damage from the storm. Witnesses frequently addressed environmental concerns in their testimony, emphasizing the need to restore and preserve the wetlands, and address global climate change and environmental justice issues that have plagued the region for several decades. For example, Marc L. Levitan, Director, Louisiana State University Hurricane Center, emphasized the critical importance of a comprehensive coastal restoration plan for the region in the recovery planning. Louisiana experiences the highest rate of land loss in the world, losing approximately 25 square miles of wetlands protection each year due to subsidence and erosion (S. 109 September 20, 2005).

Hurricane Katrina is the first disaster that prompted a national discussion of global climate change and its potential for devastating effects on society. Erik Olson, from the Natural Resources Defense Council testified: "Global warming didn't cause Katrina. But experts agree the warming climate is adding fuel to tropical storms--elevating category 3 storms into category 4 and so forth. Hotter climate also means more flood risk due to rising sea levels. There is growing bipartisan support in Congress and many states for concrete, market-based limits on global warming pollution." (H.R.

provides a useful tool for systematically organizing large amounts of textual data (Konopasek et. al. 2008). QDAS is particularly well suited for analyzing verbatim records of speech, where the goal of the research is to "derive meaning and insight from the word usage and frequency pattern found in the texts." (Yin, 2003: 110).

109, September 29, 2005). Likewise, Jerome Ringo from the National Wildlife Refuge linked global warming to the intensity of the damage done by Hurricane Katrina. He argued that global warming causes warmer sea temperatures, which intensifies hurricanes, and that the additional global warming effects of rising sea levels and vanishing wetlands will combine to have devastating effects in the future.

When discussing environmental issues and the Gulf Coast Region, environmental justice was an essential part of the witnesses' testimony, primarily because of the history and geography of the region. Several witnesses discussed the environmental recovery aspects in terms of cleanup and the legacy of past industrial contamination, particularly from the oil industry. Robert Verchick, representing the *Center for Progressive Reform*, and a New Orleans evacuee, testified that: "The environmental contamination left in the wake of Katrina is very serious and must be investigated thoroughly and remedied adequately before people are allowed back into affected areas of New Orleans. We cannot afford to repeat the mistakes of the past, many of which were rooted in the policies of neglect and racial and economic discrimination that were on full display in the immediate aftermath of the hurricane." (H.R. 109 September 29, 2005)

Another environmental justice advocate, Dr. Beverly Wright, Director of the Deep South Center for Environmental Justice, testified at three hearings. According to the organization's mission statement, "The Deep South Center for Environmental Justice (DSCEJ) was founded in 1992 in collaboration with community environmental groups and universities within the region to address issues of environmental justice. The DSCEJ...provides opportunities for communities, scientific researchers, and decision makers to collaborate on programs and projects that promote the rights of all people to be free from environmental harm as it impacts health, jobs, housing, education, and general quality of life" (Deep South Center for Environmental Justice 2009). According to Dr. Wright:

Environmental injustices will be exacerbated unless cleanup and rebuilding changes. There is a longstanding legacy of unfair and disproportionate toxic exposures to low income, predominantly African American communities in the New Orleans area and in much of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. This has resulted from years of industrial activity and waste disposal practices that hit these communities far harder than higher income, predominantly white communities. TRI and superfund facilities are located more often in low-income areas and therefore are at greater risk to post-Katrina exposure. As cleanup proceeds and rebuilding begins, every effort must be made to remedy these environmental injustices through full cleanup, fair rebuilding practices, and full partnership with affected communities (Deep South Center for Environmental Justice 2009).

#### *Race and the Legacy of Racism in the Gulf Coast Region*

Private citizens and community activists testified that racism was a major reason that so many people were abandoned in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, and they expressed serious concerns about how racism would affect the recovery process. The House Select Committee held a hearing that was solely about the role of race and class in the response to Hurricane Katrina. This is the only hearing that was held specifically about this topic<sup>4</sup>. Holding a hearing on this topic in Congress is highly unusual, particularly when it is related to a disaster (Birkland 1997). The activists testifying at this hearing were committed to representing the interests of traditionally marginalized groups in the affected communities. In his opening statement, Ishmael Muhammad (Attorney, People's Hurricane Relief Fund) exemplifies this commitment:

The purpose of the People's Hurricane Relief Fund and Mississippi Disaster Relief Coalition is to insure that those who have suffered the most before, during and after Katrina, and whose voices have been historically disregarded, are empowered to be heard and take charge of the monies being raised in their names, the reconstruction of their communities, and the repairing of their lives. Therefore, the testimony that I'm going to give today, on behalf of the legal work that we're doing and on behalf of the People's Hurricane Relief Fund and the Mississippi Disaster Relief Coalition, will be from those voices.

Race and justice concerns are a crucial part of the recovery planning process because of the legacy of racism in the Gulf Coast Region. Witnesses advocated for minority communities' needs and interests, referencing race and the devastating effects of racism on the Gulf Coast communities twenty-five times in their testimony throughout the 41 hearings held. Jazz musician Wynton Marsalis spoke about a relationship between the disastrous elements of the hurricane and the racism and poverty of New Orleans. Placing Hurricane Katrina in historical context, he noted, "Our democracy from its very beginnings has been challenged by the shackles of slavery. The parade of black folks across our TV screens...reconnects us all to the still unfulfilled goals of the Reconstruction Era. ...Not fixing the city's levees

<sup>4</sup> Not all of the witnesses' testimony was made publicly available by the committee. However, Ishmael Muhammad's testimony and the testimony of several other witnesses is available at: [http://katrina.house.gov/hearings/12\\_06\\_05/witness\\_list\\_120605.htm](http://katrina.house.gov/hearings/12_06_05/witness_list_120605.htm)

before Katrina struck will now cost us billions. Not resolving the nation's issues of class and race has and will cost us so much more" (H.R. September 18, 2005). The importance of race in recovery planning was also raised by the NAACP, as well as by individuals from the communities, such as Reverend Al Dortch. Derrick Johnson, President, Mississippi State Conference, NAACP, testified about the lack of aid that low income, African American neighborhoods received from the Red Cross and other relief agencies (H.R. 106 February 28, 2006).

#### *Class and Poverty*

Witnesses from several advocacy organizations and charities advocated for changes in housing policies as part of the recovery process. They advocated for solutions and resources to be devoted to mitigating the poverty present before the hurricane in order to create more affordable housing options and services for the poor. Organizations that provide emergency housing linked the homelessness of Hurricane Katrina to the homelessness in America. Witnesses focused on issues of inequality in their testimony. The Louisiana State Baptist Convention highlighted the shortage of affordable housing, and the additional services needed for poor and seniors. Witnesses advocated for affordable housing safe from hazards, expanded healthcare coverage, and Medicaid reform. Advocates highlighted the need to address poverty, mental illness, unemployment, abuse, hunger, homelessness, and disabilities in the recovery phase of the process.

Sharon Daly, Senior Public Policy Advisor for Catholic Charities testified at length about the problems that affected hundreds of thousands of Gulf Coast residents before the disaster, which were exacerbated by Hurricane Katrina. Specifically, Daly advocated for "Supportive Housing" after Katrina, which links affordable housing to the social services needed for residents so that they can readily access them logistically and financially (H.R. 109, September 15, 2005). Similarly, according to the testimony from Roman Nan, President of the National Alliance To End Homelessness, it is essential to involve all stakeholders in the recovery planning, including those who were forced to leave and will have the hardest time coming back, which are the poor and low income residents: "The recovery goal is to create communities that are better, stronger, and more vibrant. We must work with local, state, federal, and nonprofit agencies to create model urban, rural, and small town environments." In sum, the recurring theme among the advocates for the poor was that "the poor of the past are the vulnerable of the present," and this needs to be a central consideration moving forward into the recovery phase (H.R. 109, September 15, 2005).

#### *Housing*

Senator Kennedy (D-MA) chaired a Hurricane Katrina Roundtable Hearing, and in his opening remarks, he articulated a holistic approach to recovery that considered the needs of traditionally marginalized members of the communities affected:

For many of the survivors, the life they knew before the storm was one of ill health, inadequate education, and opportunity denied. The Nation had failed them long before Katrina hit. Our promise to those who have survived the hurricane should not simply be to turn back the clock a month or two. It should be to fulfill the true promise of the American dream by committing ourselves to better health, better education, better job opportunities for them and all Americans (United States Senate Hearing 2005).

Several witnesses attempted to connect the rebuilding needs from Hurricane Katrina to opportunities that would help traditionally disadvantaged populations. For example, according to Jennifer Learning, Professor of International Health at Harvard, "In everything we do now, it is necessary for our nation to restore its sense of itself, that we are not just a rich nation, but that we are a caring nation and that these issues of misery, class divide, racial disparity that have come to the surface now in the wake of this terrible disaster, these issues get on the national agenda and stay there. This is an opportunity as well as a major crisis" (S. September 8, 2005). Likewise, housing advocates emphasized the importance of considering needs of people with disabilities in housing design and rebuilding efforts (S. February 28, 2006).

Disaster recovery housing discussions were particularly contentious. Although the witnesses advocated for members of the affected communities who are traditionally marginalized, and often worked together to form coalitions, they were not united in their policy prescriptions. In fact, at times, their recovery policy recommendations conflicted. Witnesses representing various housing organizations advocated for the passage of affordable housing proposals. They focused on HUD proposals and funding for FY06, connecting these proposals with assistance to Gulf Coast residents. Kay Miller, from The Council for Affordable Housing, testified about the urgent need to pass pending legislation (H.R. 3715), linking its passage to increasing the speed by which housing stock will be replenished in the disaster region (S. September 8, 2005). The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and their coalition partners advocated for rebuilding efforts in New Orleans that gave first priority to low income and communities of color in the areas of the city that were most devastated, since these areas need the most support. They explicitly noted their opposition to a plan proposed by the Urban Land Institute, which proposed the opposite approach from the NRDC,

where rebuilding priority should be given to areas with the *least* damage. The NRDC opposed this plan because it would fail to provide fair and equitable rebuilding efforts (H.R. 109, September 29, 2005).

### *Gender and Women's Issues*

Interestingly, there was no mention in any of the testimony about specific women's needs and concerns for a successful recovery or discrimination women experienced, nor did any of the advocates represent women's organizations. Although witnesses did not explicitly advocate for women in the hearings, there was some discussion about issues that disproportionately affect women during recovery. The disaster recovery literature has identified unique barriers that women face during the recovery process. Affordable housing, housing programs for the elderly, who are more likely to be living in poverty and to be women, and children's education programs were issues raised by advocates. Because of the gendered division of labor in society, women are the primary caregivers for children and the elderly (Enarson, Fothergill, and Peek 2006). Likewise, after Hurricane Katrina, women of all race and class backgrounds were primarily responsible for the wellbeing of children (Peek and Fothergill 2008).

Some of the witnesses advocated for policy proposals that would benefit women, particularly those who were single heads of households. Advocates for affordable housing proposed policies that would benefit women and their families. Women are more likely to be poor than their male counterparts, particularly when the women are the head of households, and poverty is an important marker on the social vulnerability index. The Gulf Coast region affected by Hurricane Katrina has poverty rates that are nearly double the national average, (20% compared to 11%), and women in the region have significantly higher poverty rates than men. In New Orleans, which experienced the highest concentration of damage and had the largest population affected by Hurricane Katrina, nearly 26% of all women were living below the poverty level. The other affected regions of the Gulf Coast had approximately 17% of women living below the poverty level. In addition, the region has large numbers of women headed households, which face higher poverty rates than households headed by men or with two working adults. In New Orleans, 37.4% of the families were women headed households and Biloxi-Gulfport Mississippi area had 28.4% women headed households (Gault et.al. 2005).

Another area where witnesses advocated for social justice policies that would benefit women and their children as part of the recovery plan is in the area of access to public education. Michael Casserly, Executive Director, Council Of The Great City Schools, Washington, D.C. advocated for the creation of a separate fund for the Department of Education to address the critical needs of the school system, particularly in New Orleans, where 80% of the school children receive free and reduced lunch, and 94% are African American (S. September 8, 2005). Funding critical needs for schools and education is an important part of recovery for children and families. This is also particularly important for women, who expressed concern over education access and quality for their children, and cited this as an important determinant for successful recovery (Peek and Fothergill 2008). In addition to education, one witness advocated broadly for children in his testimony. Mark Shiver, Vice President and Managing Director of Save the Children, testified about the need to allocate additional resources for children during the recovery process. He emphasized the importance of providing psychosocial support in schools, safe spaces for children, pre-school programming, and out-of-school-time programs for children in grades K–8 (S. September 8, 2005).

### *Summary of Advocacy Issues Raised by Witnesses*

Witnesses raised environmental issues 44 times, which is the most frequently occurring category. Included in this category were: Superfund sites, pollution, particularly from the petrochemical industry, wetland destruction, with particular emphasis on the oil industry's role in the destruction, the need to preserve and restore marshland, global climate change and rising sea levels, and the need to build housing that takes into account the geography and social vulnerability of citizens who live in environmentally precarious areas of the Gulf Coast.

In the witness testimony that addresses the legacy of racism, the private citizens who testified spoke about the racism they experienced during the immediate aftermath of the storm, where they were harassed by police, and left behind while the (white) tourists were evacuated first. Other witnesses who testified raised the issue of housing discrimination and the practice of 'redlining', which, though illegal, was still practiced informally in the region, according to the witnesses. Testimony addressing class and poverty included the difficulties of daily life for the poor, and a need to plan for accessible services and an easier to navigate process in the rebuilding phase. The category of housing and social justice issues includes witnesses' advocacy for the many housing challenges, as well as the other issues that residents in the region struggled with before the disaster (e.g. schools, hospitals, and public safety). The social justice advocacy issues that witnesses raised in their testimony are summarized in Table 2.

<b>Table 2. Issues Witnesses Raised in Hearings</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Environmental Issues	44



Race and the legacy of racism	25
Class and poverty	25
Social Justice and housing plans	32
Gender and Women's Issues	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>126</b>

### Holistic Recovery after Hurricane Katrina

Although these categories are a useful way to conceptualize the issues witnesses discussed, in many cases the issues overlap, which is to be expected if recovery is understood applying a holistic framework. Poverty, gender, race, environmental concerns, and affordable housing are inextricably linked, as are housing locations and wetland restoration (particularly in Louisiana). Women are more likely to be poor, and to shoulder the recovery work and caretaking duties than their male counterparts (Gault et. al. 2005). Likewise, environmental justice is a multifaceted issue. As Craig E. Colten, a geologist at Louisiana State University has noted about the geology of the region: “Out West, there is a saying that water flows toward money. But in New Orleans, water flows away from money. Those with resources who control where the drainage goes have always chosen to live on the high ground. So the people in the low areas were hardest hit” (DeParle 2005). Hence, although each witness represented a different organization and advocated for those specific interests, the interests overlap. Taken together, these witnesses formulated a disaster policy that is holistic in nature, addressing vulnerability and resilience in the recovery process.

In several cases, witnesses advocated for a holistic approach to recovery and engaged in this approach. “The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) has assembled a team of its best experts on public health, toxic waste, urban design, coastal protection, energy security, and global warming to present a set of policies and practices to protect the safety and well-being of Gulf Coast residents—today, during the recovery, and onward into a healthier, more sustainable future” (H.R. 109, September 29, 2005).

Similarly, the MS-NAACP brought stakeholders together to discuss changes to housing policy as it existed before Hurricane Katrina, in preparation for the 2006 legislative session. Participants included local and national housing experts, state and local advocacy groups, legislatures, and community stakeholders. According to Derrick Johnson, President of the MS-NAACP, they identified several policy gaps that would lead to ongoing housing discrimination for African-American and low-income individuals (S. September 8, 2005).

One noteworthy exception to this pattern was advocacy for women and women's issues. There were no advocates from any women's organization at the hearings held in the six months after Hurricane Katrina. This finding is consistent with the literature, which has found that despite women's central involvement in disaster recovery, they do not typically hold positions of authority (Enarson, Fothergill, and Peek 2006). Some of the witnesses who testified discussed policy proposals that would benefit women, particularly those who were single heads of households. Affordable housing, housing programs for the elderly, who are more likely to be living in poverty and to be women, and children's education programs were issues raised by advocates. Women are most likely to be the primary caregivers after disaster and during recovery, and thus express concerns about issues related to this role as caregivers (Enarson, Fothergill and Peek 2006). After Hurricane Katrina, mothers expressed concerns related to health issues, environmental quality, safe and adequate schools, job prospects, and economic opportunities for their partners or ex-partners (Peek and Fothergill 2008). Hence, when advocates testified about these issues, they were advocating for women's issues, albeit indirectly. Although there were no witnesses advocating for women, participants in the hearings successfully raised issues that affect how well women are able to recover after disasters<sup>5</sup>.

### Concluding Thoughts

The questions guiding this research were supported by the data. The analysis revealed that witnesses were able to leverage a significant opportunity after Hurricane Katrina. Nearly 27% of the witnesses who testified at the hearings advocated for groups who are traditionally marginalized from the policy process. Further, witnesses used the opportunity presented by the catastrophe to advocate for proposals that addressed contentious social, political, and

<sup>5</sup> The lack of witnesses testifying explicitly on behalf of women or women's groups does not mean that women were absent as advocates in the overall recovery process. Scholars have detailed women's participation in the recovery process at the local and state level. It is important to note that women participated in different ways, and in grassroots recovery efforts even though they lacked a presence at the congressional hearings. See for example, Jenkins, Pamela. 2012. “Gender and the Landscape of Community Work Before and After Katrina.” Chapter 20, Pp. 169-178 in Emmanuel David and Elaine Enarson (eds), *The Women of Katrina: How Gender, Race, and Class Matter in an American Disaster*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.

environmental issues that are typically not raised during initial recovery discussions, yet are critical for a successful recovery. Cumulatively, the policy proposals that advocates argued for at the hearings reflected a holistic approach to community recovery. Instead of focusing on rebuilding and replicating the infrastructure and the housing in place before Hurricane Katrina struck, this approach is mindful of including the needs of all stakeholders, paying particular attention to the groups and individuals who are most likely to be left out of the disaster rebuilding process. Witnesses advocated a holistic approach to recovery, where recovery discussions centered on principles of sustainability and social justice. They represented traditionally marginalized populations and advocated for proposals that addressed the macro social, political, and environmental issues necessary in order to facilitate resilient and sustainable recovery plans.

This research analyzed the role of advocates in arguing for recovery proposals after Hurricane Katrina. By engaging in a thorough textual analysis of the congressional testimony of 240 witnesses, it was possible to uncover the arguments and advocacy work of the witnesses who testified on behalf of traditionally marginalized groups affected by the disaster. Although disaster scholars endorse recovery models that include all affected stakeholders, there remains a dearth of research about the conditions and processes by which those models are adopted by the community members after disaster, particularly at the federal level in the initial stages of the process. This research is an initial contribution to this area of research. Future research opportunities abound to explore the circumstances where similar holistic approaches and advocacy are employed. Hurricane Sandy would be an ideal case to apply the holistic theoretical framework and the concept of recovery proposed by Smith and Wenger (2007).

This research is a point of departure for understanding the initial phases of recovery after Hurricane Katrina. Based on these results, subsequent research should trace the arguments advanced in the witnesses' testimony to the policy adoption and implementation phase. Which of these proposals were discarded along the way, or experienced failures in the implementation phase? What explains those successes and failures? These are important questions to explore. In disaster recovery studies, the role of advocates for traditionally marginalized groups has been studied more extensively at the local levels and grassroots recovery work than at the national level<sup>6</sup>. Future research that bridges the gap between federal level policymaking and the implementation issues at the state and local levels of government will enrich our knowledge of the recovery process.

### Author's Biography

**Tanya Buhler Corbin**, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Radford University. Her primary area of research focuses on the politics and policy changes that are proposed and adopted after crises and disasters and their interrelationship to traditionally marginalized groups. In recent research, she has studied policy entrepreneurship, congressional agenda setting, and disaster recovery after Hurricane Katrina. She is currently engaged in a research project comparing local communities' policy responses after the Exxon-Valdez and BP Oil Spills.

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<sup>6</sup> Many scholars have studied the recovery challenges in New Orleans and along the Gulf Coast Region at the state and local levels across a variety of issues. Though not an exhaustive list, recent examples include: Chamlee-Wright and Storr 2010; Comfort et. al. 2010; Gotham and Greenberg 2008; Hatcher et.al. 2012; Olshansky and Johnson 2010.

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## APPENDIX A

### CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS

Hearing Number	Date	Committee	Hearing Title
109-235	9/06/05	Energy and Natural Resources	Gasoline Prices
109-32	9/07/05	Energy and Commerce	Hurricane Katrina's Effect on Gasoline Supply and Prices
109-266	9/08/05	Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions	Roundtable Discussion: Hurricane Katrina
109-53	9/14/05	Financial Services	Hurricane Katrina: Financial Institutions' Response
109-399	9/14/05	Homeland Security and governmental affairs	Recovering from Hurricane Katrina: The Next Phase
109-54	9/15/05	Financial Services	Emergency Housing Needs in the Aftermath of Katrina
109-85	9/15/05	Government Reform	Back to the Drawing Board: A First Look at Lessons Learned from Katrina
N/A*	9/20/05	(Senate) Commerce, Science, and Transportation	Hurricane Prediction and Preparation
109-74	9/22/05	Energy and Commerce	The Commerce and Consumer Protection Implications of Hurricane Katrina
N/A*	9/22/05	(Senate) Science and Transportation	Disaster Communications

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109-408	9/22/05	Small Business and Entrepreneurship	The Impact of Hurricane Katrina on Small Businesses
109-50	9/22/05	Energy and Commerce	Assessing Public Health and the Delivery of Care in the Wake of Katrina
109-789	9/28/05	Finance	Hurricane Katrina: Community Rebuilding Needs and Effectiveness of Past Proposals
109-52	9/29/05	Energy and Commerce	Public Safety Communications From 9/11 to Katrina: Critical Public Policy Lessons
109-77	9/29/05	Energy and Commerce	Hurricane Katrina: Assessing the Present Environmental Status
109-279	10/6/05 10/27/05	Energy and Natural Resources	Hurricanes Katrina and Rita
109-801	10/06/05	Finance	The Future of the Gulf Coast
109-34	10/07/05	Small Business	Small Business and Hurricane Katrina: Rebuilding the Economy
*N/A	10/17/05	Senate Democratic Policy Committee	Handling of Federal Contracts After Hurricane Katrina
109-830	10/18/05 1/25/05 2/2/06	Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs	The Future of the National Flood Insurance Program
109-35	10/18/05	Transportation and Infrastructure	A Vision and Strategy For Rebuilding New Orleans
109-36	10/20/05	Transportation and Infrastructure	Expert Views on Hurricane and Flood Protection and Water Resources Planning for a Rebuilt Gulf Coast
109-18	10/26/05	Agriculture	Current Impact of Mississippi River Transportation on Agricultural Markets
109-38	10/27/05	Transportation and Infrastructure	Reducing Hurricane and Flood Risk in the Nation
109-110	11/1/05	Government Reform	Historic Preservation vs. Katrina
109-1000	11/2/05	Environment and Public Works	The Second in a Series of Two Hearing to Discuss the Response to Hurricane Katrina
109-1007	11/8/05	Environment and Public Works	Impact of Certain Governmental Contractor Liability Proposals on Environmental Laws
109-1009	11/9/05	Environment and Public Works	Forming a Comprehensive Approach to Meeting the Water needs of Coastal

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109-35	11/10/05	Resources	Louisiana in the wake of Hurricanes Karina and Rita NEPA Litigation
109-32	11/10/05	Science	Role of Social Science Research in Disaster Preparedness and Response
109-538	11/16/05	Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs	Hurricane Katrina: What can the Government Learn from the Private Sector's Response?
109-1013	11/17/05	Environment and Public Works	Evaluate the Degree to Which the Preliminary Findings on the Failure of the Levees are being Incorporated into the Restoration of Hurricane Protection
109-52	12/13/05	Ways and Means	To Review the Response by Charities to Hurricane Katrina
109-69	12/15/05	Resources	An Assessment of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on Gulf of Mexico Fishery
109-69	1/13/06	Financial Services	Housing Options in the Aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita
109-70	1/14/06	Financial Services	Housing Options in the Aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita
109-115	1/26/06	Energy and Commerce	Hospital Disaster Preparedness: Past, Present, and Future
109-807	2/6/06	Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs	Managing Law Enforcement and Communications in a Catastrophe
109-74	2/28/06	Financial Services	Fair Housing Issues In the Gulf Coast in the Aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita
**N/A	12/6/05	Select Bipartisan Committee to Investigate the Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina	Hurricane Katrina: Voices from Inside the Storm

\*This hearing is has not been published by the GPO. Partial testimony was publicly available.

\*\*Witness testimony is available at: [http://katrina.house.gov/hearings/12\\_06\\_05/witness\\_list\\_120605.htm](http://katrina.house.gov/hearings/12_06_05/witness_list_120605.htm)

**Appendix B: WITNESSES AND AFFILIATIONS CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS**

WITNESS	WITNESS AFFILIATION
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Harry Alford	National Black Chamber of Commerce
Henry Alvarez	National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials
Paul Anthony	Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers Association
Yavonka Archaga	Resources for Independent Living
Barbara Arnwine	Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights
Diana Aviv	Independent Sector Washington DC
Alta Baker	Safe Haven Enterprises
Hector Barreto	U.S. Small Business Administration
Sandy Baruah	Economic Development Administration
Clanton Beamon	National Rural Housing Coalition
Joseph Becker	American Red Cross
Paul Becker	Willis North American Construction Practice
Chad Berginnis	Immediate Past Chair
Keith Blackwell	Coastal Weather Research Center
Barabara Blakeney	American Nurses Association
Robert C. Bobb	District of Columbia
Diane Bolen	Mississippi Home Corporation
Ken Bordelon	National Association of Federal Credit Unions
Daniel Borochoff	American Institute of Philanthropy
Art Botterell	Independent Consultant
Sheri Cox Bowling	Paralyzed Veterans of America
David G. Boyd	Safecom Program Office
Elise Boyer	Resident - New Orleans
Ralph Brennan	Ralph Brennan Restaurant Group
Peter Brink	National Trust for Historic Preservation
Jeffrey Brodsky	National Multi Housing Council & National Leased Housing Association
Mark Browne	School of Business University of Wisconsin

Raymond Butler	Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association
Joe Cappiello	Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations
James Carafano	Heritage Foundation
Tony Carper	Broward Emergency Management Agency
Diane Casey-Landry	American's Community Bankers
Michael Casserly	Council of the Great City Schools
Chief Carlos Castillo	Miami-Dade County Office of Emergency Management
Red Cavaney	American Petroleum Institute
Kim Dunn Chapital	Deep South Center for Environmental Justice
Jeffrey Citron	Vonage
Rodger Clark	Housing Authority of the City of Long Beach Mississippi
C. R. Cloutier	Independent Community Bankers Association
Sidney Coffee	Governor's Office of Coastal Activities
Harry Connick Jr.	Habitat for Humanity International
Benjamin S. Cooper	Association of Oil Pipelines
Mark N. Cooper	Consumer Federation of America
Caren Cowan	New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association
Lisa Cox	National Association of Community Health Centers
Sheila Crowley	National Low Income Housing Coalition
Windell Curole	South Lafourche Levee District
Kevin S. Curtis	National Environmental Trust
Susan Cutter	Hazards Research Lab University of South Carolina
Robert Dalrymple	American Society of Civil Engineers
Sharon Daly	Catholic Charities USA
Robert L. Darbelnet	American Automobile Association
John Davies	Baton Rouge Area Foundation
Wallace Davis	Volunteers of America-Southeast



Debbie Dease	Sierra Club
McKinley W. Deaver	American Bankers Association
Bob Dickey	National Corn Growers Association
Edward Dickey	Loyola College of Maryland
Daniel L. Doctoroff	Economic Development and Rebuilding for the City of New York
Roy Dokka	Louisiana Spatial Reference Center and Center for Geoinformatics
Chris Dorsett	The Ocean Conservancy
Bill Douglass	National Association of Convenience Stores
Roger J. Dow	Travel Industry Association
John Dowd	Sanford C. Bernstein and Co., LLC
F.G. Dowden	New Orleans Department of Homeland Security and Public Safety
Bob Dufour	National Association of Chain Drug Stores
George Dunlop	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Phil Eide	Enterprise Corporation of the Delta
Douglas J. Elliot	Center on Federal Financial Institutions
Charles Elliott	Credit Union National Association
Steve Ellis	Taxpayers for Common Sense
Rodney Emmer	Louisiana Floodplain Management Association
Maurice Emsellem	National Employment Law Project
Hossein Eslambolchi	AT&T Global Networking Technology Services
Derrick Evans	Turkey Creek Community Initiatives
Scott Faber	Environmental Defense
Cynthia Fagnoni	U.S. Government Accountability Office
Henry Falk	National Center for Environmental health and Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
Paul Farmer	American Planning Institute
Michael Feigin	Bovis Lend Lease Holding Inc.

John Felmy	American Petroleum Institute
Peter Fonash	National Communications Systems
Cathi Fontenot	Medical Center Of Louisiana
Dyan French	New Orleans Citizen and Community Leader
Willie Gable	National Baptist Convention
Sherwood Gagliana	Coastal Environments Inc.
Floyd Gaibler	Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services
Timothy Gallagher	North American Export Grain Association
Gerald Galloway	University of Maryland College Park
Karen K. Gautreaux	Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
Patricia H. Gay	Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans
Julie Gerberding	Department of health and Human Services
David Gibbons	American Financial Services Association
Renne Goux	Tenet Healthcare Corporation
Dr. Jane Gravelle	Congressional Research Service
Darrius Gray	Greater New Orleans Hotel & Lodging Association
Cynthia Griffin	Habitat for Humanity
James Hale	Laborers' International Union of North America
Dale Hall	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Keith Hall	U.S. Department of Commerce
John Harral	Institute for Crisis Disaster
Richard Harris	Harris Homes
Robert Hartwig	Insurance Information Institute
Major Todd Hawks	Salvation Army of America
Curtis Hebert	Entergy
Christopher Helms	Interstate Natural Gas Association of America
David M. Heuther	National Association of Manufacturers

William Hines	Economic Development Committee New Orleans
Vance Hitch	Department of Justice
Daniel Hitchings	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Leah Hodges	New Orleans Citizen and Evacuee
William Hogarth	National Marine Fisheries Service
H.T. Holmes	Mississippi Department of Archives and History
Jan Hoogland	Rijkswaterstaat
Ardis Hoven	American Medical Association
J.K. Huey	Mortgage Bankers Association
J. Robert Hunter	Consumer Federation of America
Jason Jackson	Walmart Stores
William O. Jenkins Jr.	Homeland Security
Derrick Johnson	Mississippi NAACP
Eddie Johnson	Education
Bennet Johnston	State of Louisiana
Carlton Jones	Second Sweet Home Church
Doreen Keeler	New Orleans Citizen and Evacuee
Martha Kegel	UNITY for the Homeless
James Kelly	Catholic Charities USA
Jack Kemp	Kemp Partners
Judith Kennedy	National Association of Affordable Housing Lenders
Craig King	Private Citizen
Thomas Kirsch	American Red Cross
Al Knight	Knight Enterprises, LLC
Robert Kohlmeyer	World Perspectives Inc.
Norman Koonce	The American Institute of Architects
Harold Kramer	The National Association for Amateur Radio

Gary P. LaGrange	Port of New Orleans & American Association of Port Authorities
Mitchell Landrieu	State of Louisiana
Chris Landsea	National Weather Service
Jan Lane	American Red Cross
Shirley Laska	Center for Hazards Assessment
Jennifer Leaning	Harvard School of Public Health
Dr. Marc Levitan	Hurricane Center
Muriel Lewis	National Association of Katrina Evacuees
Stanley Litow	Corporate Community Relations IBM
Andrew Liveris	Dow Chemical Company
Iain Logan	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
George Mannina	National Association of Charter Boat Operators
Wynton Marsalis	Private Citizen-Musician
Kevin Martin	Federal Communications Commission
Janet Matthews	National Park Service
David Maurstad	Federal Emergency Management Agency
Max Mayfield	National Hurricane Center, Tropical Prediction Center
Thomas McGarity	Center for Progressive Reform
Kevin Mercadel	Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans
Leonard Merrel	Katy Independent School District
Kay Miller	Council for Affordable and Rural Housing
Lt. Col. Thomas Miller	Michigan State Police
Herbert Mitchell	U.S. Small Business Administration
Anu Mittal	U.S. General Accountability Office
Richard Moe	The National Trust for Historic Preservation
Mike Moran	Knight Enterprises, LLC
Marc Morial	National Urban League, Inc.

St. Julien Mtumishi	Finance Authority of New Orleans
Ishmael Muhammad	Advancement Project
A. Gary Muller	West Jefferson Medical Center
Paul Mullinax	Refrigerated Tractor Trailor
Janet Murguia	National Council of La Raza
John Nau	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
James Newsome	New York Mercantile Exchange
Shantrell Nicks	Resident - New Orleans
William A. Niskanen	CATO Institute
Randy Noel	Reve Inc.
Michelle Noris	American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging
Dan O'Hair	Department of Communication University of Oklahoma
Erik D. Olson	Natural Resources Defense Council
Jean-Mari Peltier	National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
Randy Perkins	Perkins Production Inc.
Warren Perkins	BOH Brothers Construction Company
Constance Perett	Office of Emergency Management LA, CA
William Perret	Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council
James Perry	Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center
Stephen Perry	New Orleans Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau
Mark Peters	American Hospital Association
David Preziosi	Mississippi Heritage Trust
Peter Rabbon	National Association of Flood and Stormwater Management Agencies
Stephen E. Ragone	National Ground Water Association
David Ratcliffe	Southern Company
Denise Reed	Department of Geology and Geophysics University of New Orleans
Kevin Regan	Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide Inc.

Joseph Rich	Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
Brenda Richards	Idaho Cattle Association
Major General Don Riley	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Warren Riley	New Orleans Police Department
Jerome Ringo	National Wildlife Federation
Larry Rith	American Society of Civil Engineers
David Roberson	Manufactured Housing Institute and Association for Regulatory Reform
Patrick Roberts	Florida Association of Broadcasters
David Robertson	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
Timothy Roemer	Center for National Policy
Nan Roman	National Alliance to End Homelessness
Marcie Roth	National Spinal Cord Injury Association
Paul Roth	Cingular Wireless
Diane Roussel	Jefferson Parish School District
John Roussel	Gulf State Marine Fisheries Association
John Rowland	National Federation of Independent Businesses
James Russo	Federal Emergency Management Agency
Rae Ann Ryan	Travel Affiliates
Joseph Savoie	Higher Education
Larry Schedler	National Multi Housing Council
Steven Schooner	George Washington University Law School
John H. Seesel	Federal Trade Commission
Jon Sewell	Universal Health Services, Inc.
Hilary O. Shelton	NAACP
William S. Shipley III	National Association of Convenience Stores
Mark Shiver	Save the Children
Joel Shufro	New York Committee for occupational Safety and health

Roxane Cohen Silber	Department of Psychology and Social Behavior University of California Irvine
Bernard Simmons	National Association of Community Health Centers, Inc.
Bob Slaughter	National Petrochemical and Refiners Association
Bill Smith	Bellsouth
Gavin Smith	Office of Recovery and Renewal
Kathleen Smith	Education Finance Council
Robert Smith	Tenet Healthcare Corporation
Shanna Smith	National Fair Housing Alliance
William L. Smith	Bellsouth Corporation
Donald R. Smithburg	LSU System
Eliis Stanely	Emergency Preparedness Department, city of LA CA
Pauline Stewart	Resident - New Orleans
Lt. General Carl Strock	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
William Strock	Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
Joseph Suhayda	Louisiana State University
Michele Sutton	Fairway Ventures
Thomas Swindall	SWR, INC.
Barbara Thompson	National Council of State Housing Agencies
Patricia Thompson	New Orleans Citizen and Evacuee
Tony Trujillo	Satellite Industry Association
Michael Vanacore	Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Robert Verchick	Center for Progressive Reform
Michael Voisin	Motivatit Seafoods Inc.
Nick Walters	Mississippi Rural State Development
Charlie Ware	Wyoming Workforce Development Council
Kenneth Weigand	Walgreens
Scott Wells	Federal Emergency Management Agency

Marilyn White	Salvation Army
Royce Wilken	National Grain and Feed Association
Mary Lynn Wilkerson	Louisiana Small Business Development Center
Guy Williams	Gulf Coast Bank and Trust
Rosemary Williams	Mount Zion United Methodist Church
Terrol Williams	New Orleans Citizen and Evacuee
David Wilson	National Association of Home Builders
Woodrow J. Wilson, Jr.	Gulf South Animated Motion technology
Robert Winn	Fishman & Nathan LLP
John Paul Woodley Jr.	Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army
Beverly Wright	Deep South Center for Environmental Justice
Beverly Wright	National Black Environmental Justice Network
Johnny Wyatt	Bossier City, Louisiana
George Yin	Joint Committee on Taxation Washington DC
Anthony Zelenka	Bertucci Contracting Corporation
Thomas Zimmie	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute