

sure this part of the region fully recovers, please participate. Please find a way to help and continue to do so.

So, Governor, I'm honored you're here. Laura and I are thrilled to be in this school. We're really pleased that MLK School has given us an opportunity to herald excellence.

Mrs. Hicks. Thank you.

The President. We care deeply about the folks in this part of the world. We ask for God's blessings on the families who still hurt and suffer. And we thank God for

the recovery efforts that thus far have taken place.

Thank you for your time.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:40 a.m. at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School for Science and Technology. In his remarks, he referred to Rep. William J. Jefferson; Hilda Young, president, Friends of King Board; Eric Johnson, seventh-grade math teacher, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Charter School for Science and Technology; and Gary Robichaux, former principal, KIPP McDonogh 15 School for the Creative Arts.

Remarks Following a Visit With New Homeowners in New Orleans August 29, 2007

The President. We have just—Laura and I have just been given a tour by the Whites in their new home. And they're going to be moving into this home this weekend maybe.

Gen White. Yes, this weekend.

The President. There's nothing more hopeful than to be with somebody who says, "Welcome to my home," particularly given the fact that these mixed-use housing projects have replaced old-style, low-income housing projects that frankly didn't work. In other words, the storm came, created a lot of heartbreak and heartache, but people took a different look at how best to help people in their homes.

And we're in this beautiful project. This is a stunning project. So I'm with homeowners-to-be, renters. Here's a homeowner-to-be right here. Right across the street, as a matter of fact, isn't that right? People are going to be able to say, "This is my home."

This is really a remarkable project. For people in New Orleans who remember what this site was like compared to what it is today, they've got to be full of hope. And so I appreciate the builders. I appreciate Alphonso Jackson in Housing and Urban Development, the group that have helped get this project started. But most of all, I appreciate the homeowners-to-be, people who are working hard to be able to say, "This is my home." And we really appreciate you giving us a chance to come by.

Ms. White. Thank you.

The President. And we wish you all the very best in your new home. Congratulations to you.

Thank you all. Good job. Thank you. Good luck to you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:06 a.m. at the River Garden Housing Complex.

Remarks on Gulf Coast Reconstruction in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi August 29, 2007

Thank you all for coming. This is the second anniversary of an event that changed a lot of people's lives here in southern Mississippi and up and down the coast. And Laura and I are honored to be with some of those who endured the storm and have dedicated their lives to rebuilding this part of the world.

We've been down here a lot, and as a result, I've gotten to know the local officials and have come to admire them as people dedicated to public service the way it ought to be. I first of all want to thank the Senator, Trent Lott, and his wife Tricia, for joining us. Nobody cares more about the people of southern Mississippi than the Lotts. The people of southern Mississippi are fortunate to have not only a active Senator, but a powerful Senator working on their behalf. And so, Senator, thank you for being here.

Gene Taylor cares a lot. Laura and I are proud to be here with Congressman Taylor. Gene was raised here. The Taylors' daughter was married right there recently. This is where he told me he was baptized, married, and if you're compassionate enough, will be buried. *[Laughter]* In other words, this is home. And when you're talking about a man's home, you hear a sense of passion in his voice. The Congressman has worked hard to make sure the people down here are well represented, and he's doing a fine job for the people of southern Mississippi. Congressman, thank you for being here.

The Governor of Mississippi has shown his true mettle and his value to the people of Mississippi. When crisis hit, he was calm. When the crisis began to abate a little bit, he planned. And he's been good for the people down here. He's taken a problem on, and he's coordinated it and managed in a way that you'd expect your chief executive to do. And so, Governor, I want to

congratulate you on a job well done. I appreciate the First Lady being here as well. Thanks for working hard for the people down here.

Joining us are members of—a member of my Cabinet, Alphonso Jackson, Housing and Urban Development man. Don Powell is here. He is the Federal Coordinator of the Office of Gulf Coast Rebuilding. That really means that he is the President's eyes and ears on the ground. And while we recognize that there are bureaucracies that we have to deal with in order to make sure the taxpayers' money is spent wisely, sometimes the bureaucracies get in the way of common sense. And one of Don's jobs is to help spot that—those obstacles to progress and work with the local folks to try to clear them out of the way.

There's still obstacles, and there's still work to be done. But there's been a lot of progress made, and that's what people have got to understand. And I have come to this site, it's what we call ground zero—this is where the worst of the worst of the storm hit—to be able to show the American people that through their generosity, this infrastructure has been rebuilt.

Before I get there, I do want to thank Phil Bryant, the State auditor, for joining us. Appreciate you coming, Phil. And then I want to pay tribute to the local folks that I mentioned.

First of all, Eddie Favre—he's the mayor of the city of Bay St. Louis. Eddie's—for those of you who may be paying attention to this from around the country, he's the man who—would be known as the man who wears short pants. *[Laughter]* Eddie is—he's a colorful character, but he also is a smart man who has dedicated more in his life than he ever dreamed to helping rebuild a city he loves.