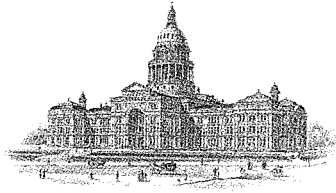


The Senate of The State of Texas



December 15, 2008

Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr.

Michael Gerber
Executive Director
Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs
P.O. Box 13941
Austin, Texas 78711-3941

RE: *State of Texas Plan for Disaster Recovery.*

Dear Mr. Geber:

Thank you for allowing public feedback to the draft *State of Texas Plan for Disaster Recovery*. Unfortunately, I respectfully write to express my reservations and concerns to the "*Proposed Plan*" as it is currently drafted.

As you are aware, housing advocates have reported that there is ample room for improving the *Proposed Plan* because it is currently based on estimates from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that are incomplete at best, and faulty at worst. Because of these FEMA assessments that some are calling flawed, Lower Rio Grande Valley Hurricane Dolly victims would be getting less than 2% of the \$1.3 billion that was allocated to Texas for both Hurricanes Dolly and Ike reconstruction. This means that Valley Dolly victims would only get about \$15 million of the \$1.3 billion (1.46%) for their reconstruction/rebuilding efforts. Such disparity, especially to a service population that is predominantly low-income, makes people question whether the drafters of the *Proposed Plan* actually took the time to visit with Dolly victims and witnessed their plight first-hand. A thorough, on-site walkthrough of the homes that were denied assistance would have made it clear how deficient FEMA's destruction figures were and provided the necessary reasons why Texas' *Proposed Plan* should be based on more thorough assessments.

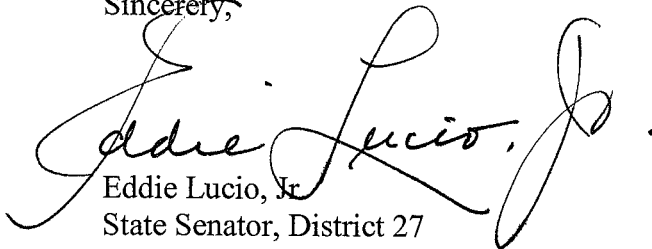
As the media has documented, FEMA's assessments for Hurricane Dolly's destruction have come under question and are currently being challenged by local activists, as well as by those who fight for the rights of low-income residents. Accordingly, I hope you would agree that Texas can do a better job in helping Valley Hurricane Dolly victims who were denied assistance by the half-complete FEMA assessments. It is clear that it would behoove the state to develop its own cost estimates in an immediate, yet diligent, manner rather than base the *Proposed Plan* on figures that seem to be imprecise and that have left some Valley Dolly victims without assistance in their reconstruction efforts.



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It is my hope that whatever plan is finalized takes into account the plight of low- and moderate-income persons (as outlined in the National Objectives) as they try to reconstruct and rebuild their homes, as well as, fill in the gaps left by past FEMA efforts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eddie Lucio, Jr." followed by a large flourish.

Eddie Lucio, Jr.
State Senator, District 27

Cc: Charles S. Stone, Executive Director, Office of Rural Community Affairs