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Obama Administration Officials, State and Local Leaders Collaborate on Coordinated Approach to Gulf Coast's Future

New Orleans Mayor-Elect Landrieu Hosted Officials from the White House and a Dozen Federal Agencies along with Senator Landrieu, Congressman Cao and other Louisiana Officials

NEW ORLEANS—Representatives from twelve federal agencies and the White House met Sunday and Monday in New Orleans with Mayor-Elect Mitch Landrieu and members of his transition team, for a series of working sessions focused on policy priorities for the city and the Obama Administration.

Topics discussed during the two-day gathering included: jobs, housing, education, healthcare, ecosystem restoration and criminal justice. A lunchtime discussion highlighted the Administration's Sustainable Communities Initiative, an interagency partnership intended to improve access to affordable housing, increase transportation options, and lower transportation costs while protecting the environment in communities nationwide.

"Together with state and local officials, we are continuing the Administration's commitment to a coordinated and holistic strategy to build New Orleans back up stronger and smarter and better than it was before the storm," said U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Shaun Donovan.

"President Obama is committed to restoring this great city. As a native of New Orleans and a member of this administration, I'm happy to be part of rebuilding my home city in a way that strengthens the environmental and economic health of the community," said EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson. "We're proud to show the people of New Orleans that they have the full support of this administration."

"These meetings are the latest demonstration of the President's ongoing commitment to this region, which is making remarkable progress in education and other areas," said Tony Miller, Deputy Secretary of Education.

In addition to Secretary Donovan, EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, and Deputy Secretary Miller, participants in the meetings included Senator Mary Landrieu, Representative Anh "Joseph" Cao, Mayor-Elect Mitch Landrieu, and numerous state officials.

"I would like to thank President Obama for his commitment to New Orleans and the Federal agencies who have come here to meet these past few days. The work we started will have a great impact on how New Orleans is rebuilt and reshaped," said New Orleans Mayor-elect Mitch Landrieu. "New Orleans offers an opportunity to do something transformative and meaningful. This unique place offers a laboratory where the President's agenda can be realized."

Since taking office in January 2009, the Obama Administration has worked hard to provide residents of the Gulf Coast with the tools that they need to recover from the hurricanes, and to rebuild their lives and communities. The Administration is deeply committed to serving the needs of Gulf Coast residents, as it has shown by cutting through the bureaucratic red tape that delayed assistance and by improving coordination among Federal agencies and with State and local government partners. As a result, nearly \$2.4 billion for Public Assistance projects in Louisiana and Mississippi that had been stalled for years has been obligated since the start of the Administration; and thousands of individuals who had been dependent on temporary disaster housing are on the road to self-sufficiency.

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