

who has the time decides whether to yield.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I just yielded. I said I yield.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Chair would remind the gentleman that it is the gentlewoman from California who has the time.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I apologize. I would ask the gentlelady to yield.

Ms. WATERS. I am not likely to want to yield to him. I want you to finish this up.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Please yield.

Ms. WATERS. If you insist.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I do. I hope the Chair is happy.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Chair is trying to maintain order.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I apologize. The gentlelady has yielded.

Ms. WATERS. Reluctantly.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from New Jersey has been yielded to by the gentlewoman from California.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. The gentleman, first of all, misstates the actual language of the underlying bill when he says that the housing fund is a tax on profits of the GSEs. It is not a tax simply on the profits of the GSEs. It is a tax of the overall activity.

Ms. WATERS. Reclaiming my time, I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I thank the gentlewoman.

That is not what I said. I said reducing the profitability. I would ask the gentlewoman not to yield any further. We are not going to get an answer. I apologize for starting the whole thing.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to yield to my good friend from New Jersey.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Just one final point, and I do believe that the gentleman was saying that it was a tax on the profits of the GSEs as opposed to that. But be that as it may, remember, to the point the gentleman from Georgia made, the GSEs, even with this amendment, would still be allowed to securitize those larger loans.

This doesn't preclude them from doing that. It simply says that they should not be holding them in their portfolios, whereas the gentleman from Texas reiterated the point of Chairman Bernanke, that raises the overall risk to the overall functioning of the GSEs.

Finally, since they are able to continue to issue those large loans and therefore securitize those loans, the overall market of the GSEs is not hurt in one sense, and the profitability at the end of the day, as far as the money going to the low and moderate incomes, is not impacted.

Low and moderate income families are benefited by this bill. Taxpayers are benefited by this bill inasmuch as we reduce the risk of the GSEs on the

one hand and we address and make sure that the GSEs return to their basic function of providing liquidity to the marketplace and providing access for low and moderate income housing in this country.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, I commend the gentleman for his amendment.

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I followed this debate for several hours now, both here on the House floor and in my office, and what I sense is some people having a lot of fun at the expense of the least among us.

In my State tonight, 75,000 people will go to sleep in a FEMA trailer that the United States Department of Health has ruled is a health hazard because they have carcinogens in them. They have formaldehyde in them. But it beats the heck out of sleeping in a Chevy Astro Van. It beats the heck out of sleeping on their mother-in-law's couch, if their mother-in-law has a couch.

□ 2045

In the State of Louisiana, there are 49,000 families who will go to sleep in a FEMA trailer. Down around Bayou La Batre, Alabama, another thousand; in Texas, another thousand. This isn't a joke. This is trying to help the least among us. That is why you see Mr. BAKER trying to help this bill, and that is why you see me trying to help this bill. It is not a joke.

We talk about we ought to be doing better things with this money. What is better than helping people who 2 years ago who were middle class, who had homeowners insurance, who got screwed by the insurance company and woke up to find out they were poor because they lost everything in one night and their insurance company didn't pay.

No, I won't yield. You've had hours.

And they can't get any housing built because the workers can't move is because there is no place for the workers to live to build the houses. And yes, it is still going on, for those of you who wonder.

I am a U.S. Congressman. I am living in my third place since the storm. You all know what we make. We make lots of money. It's not that I can't afford one, there is none to get.

I am a Congressman. If that is happening to me at my salary, what do you think is happening to a school-teacher or a retired chief petty officer or a policeman or a fireman. I thought that was what we were about, was helping people.

All of a sudden you are concerned about borrowing and where this money should go. It didn't bother you when you borrowed money from the communist Chinese. It didn't bother you for the past 12 years when you took money out of the Social Security trust fund. It bothers you now when we want to help the average Joes? Well, that bothers me.

The chairman is exactly right. The same folks who say we should have no accountability of where the billions of dollars go in Iraq, all of a sudden, demand that this money that might help somebody who used to be an average Joe who now finds himself in a horrible situation, my God, you don't want to do that.

Cut the games out. This is serious. This is about housing, a basic need. A basic need for our fellow Americans, not Iraqis. Our fellow Americans.

I have sat here and watched this game go on for hours, and I have had enough. I think the people of America, if they are following this debate, they've had enough.

It is time to move this bill. If you don't think it is a good idea to take the profits from this organization and ask that they be directed towards the housing needs of our fellow Americans, vote against the bill. But I happen to think that is a pretty good idea because I know guys who used to live in 6,000 square foot houses who are going to spend tonight in a FEMA trailer. Not because they want to, because they got screwed by their insurance company. They are still going to work. They can't find somebody to build a house.

When you lose 60,000 houses overnight, it puts a heck of a strain on the system. And when the workers who want to come there and build those houses have no place to live, it makes it even worse. We are trying to address that. These are real needs for real people.

You've made whatever political points you want to make to your constituency, but now it is time to move on and help our fellow Americans.

Mr. FEENEY. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, before I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey to respond, I would say that, as has been pointed out earlier, this Congress has already provided some \$3 billion in housing relief, and I have an amendment coming up that would put the first year's funding into Hurricane Katrina relief for housing.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FEENEY. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. People keep talking about \$3 billion for Katrina. There was no housing construction fund in the hurricane bill. If that is meant to be construction, it is simply not the case. We put vouchers into the hurricane bill, but there was not \$3 billion in any housing construction in the Katrina bill.

Mr. FEENEY. Reclaiming my time, my amendment up next, will help veterans in the long run, and in the short run will go to Hurricane Katrina relief.

I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT).

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. I thank the gentleman from Florida and the gentleman from Mississippi, although I cringe when Members on the

those who are left stranded. I think this Congress is better than that.

Mr. JEFFERSON. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

I appreciate the arguments that are being made. I thank the people of Texas and Georgia and of Tennessee and all over the country who have taken in our residents who have had to flee in the face of a devastating storm.

Louisiana lost 225,000 housing units. The bulk were homeowner units, and the rest were rental properties. The city was 80 percent underwater and severely devastated.

Louisiana suffered 75 percent of the gulf coast housing damage, and that is why the number is as it is. It wasn't pulled out of the air. They tried to apply some remedy here. Initially when the money was first allocated, Louisiana, although it suffered 75 percent of the housing damage, and overall, about 80 percent of the damage of the storm, it nonetheless got some number around 50 percent of the allocation.

This is an effort to correct what was not done properly in the first place, and try to line it up with the damage in Louisiana.

Mississippi had some number in the 20s with respect to their losses. So it is an attempt to line it up with the damage there.

I can tell you we are looking to get, in the case of folks who are in the east part of Texas, we hope that we are making arrangements to get a whole lot of those folks back home and out of Texas. This is about rebuilding. It is not really about housing people.

I heard some arguments early on about how many folks are still in Houston. There are about 30,000 people in Houston from my home area, and there are a number of people in San Antonio and Dallas, also. There are also people in Atlanta and Memphis, as I have said. We want to get all of these folks back home. We still have 225,000 of our citizens not back in town. It is a great tragedy that has occurred there.

You might remember, a great part of what happened to us in Louisiana, at least, maybe less so in Mississippi, is not really because of the hurricane itself, it was because of the failure of the Federal levees that drowned our city. The design was poor. Construction was inadequate, and the maintenance was not good. As a consequence, the levees broke and it drowned our city.

We believe there is not just a legal responsibility, but a moral responsibility to fix the problem because the Federal Government broke it and we think it ought to fix it.

So we have a devastated area. Half of our city's tax base is back. Half our schools and hospitals are closed. Our housing isn't there, and our people need a lot of help. The money so far hasn't done it, and we want to get more to apply to the problem. That is all we are saying.

That is why the committee has gone to great pains to try to make this allo-

cation. I know there is pain in some other places, but we have to apply the limited resources we have to take care of the place that is the most devastated, and that is clearly in Louisiana and Mississippi.

I would urge the House to reject this amendment. I do understand there is a need to help in other places, but I hope we find a way to do it in some other bill and some other time, but not here and not now and not in this particular place.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word, and I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY).

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the arguments that my friend from Louisiana has made, but I think it is important to understand that you can't tell someone in one State, your home is destroyed, your roof has been torn off, a tree has gone through it; but you are in this State, so we will help you. The exact same hurricane and the exact same devastation, forget it, take a hike. You deserve no help from us.

□ 2300

I don't think any citizen in America who has seen their home destroyed ought to have to compete against someone else in another State to get Federal help. I mean, aren't we supposed to be treating our citizens equally?

And when you have a hurricane that's devastated both sides of the State line, why are we dividing that hurricane along the State line? Mother Nature can't do it, and Congress shouldn't either.

We should help those people, regardless. One hurricane, same treatment, same devastation. I think we have a moral responsibility to help people who no longer can return to their homes, whether it is in New Orleans or whether it is in Orange, Texas. We have the exact same moral responsibility to help, and I cannot see how we, as a government, can justify different treatments, treating one group as second-class citizens when they've done nothing but suffer devastating damage and open their own homes and hearts and churches to help others. It is wrong.

Let's not divide this hurricane along State lines. Let's help these folks.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Chairman, I reclaim my time and I ask the gentleman so I make sure I understand your amendment here, but currently the allocation is 75 percent for Louisiana and 25 percent for Mississippi. And all the gentleman is asking here is that Texas get 10 percent of this housing fund, 5 percent taken from Louisiana and 5 percent from Mississippi. So you're requesting 10 percent for the people of Texas that suffered the same devastation and loss as the people in Louisiana and Mississippi; is that correct?

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. It is a negligible change for our friends in Lou-

isiana and Mississippi. It is a huge help for the people in southeast and east Texas who have no homes.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. I thank the gentleman, and I, like the gentleman, encourage this is a fair amendment. We have passed out a tremendous amount of resources for Mississippi and Louisiana.

I've been to the gentleman from Louisiana's and to the gentleman from Mississippi's district. I have seen the recovery efforts down there, obviously a lot of devastation in those States, and a rebuilding program is going on. Quite honestly, I have to compliment the gentleman from Mississippi. They are doing a much better job of moving forward with their rebuilding program.

But one of the things that we need to understand is these natural disasters affect all Americans, and that when we begin to ask this Congress to pass out resources to help people in America rebuild their lives, that we don't do it along State lines.

And I agree with the gentleman, and I encourage everyone to support the gentleman's amendment. I think it is a very fair amendment.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ACTING CHAIRMAN
The Acting CHAIRMAN (Mr. WEINER). The gentleman will remove the visual aid while he is not under recognition.

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Speaker, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Speaker, the events of the fall of 2005 were horrible to a large portion of the gulf coast. I understand the gentleman's concern. I would have appreciated if he'd have voted against the Bachus amendment, which would have struck all of this money, but you voted for it.

But one thing I wanted to point out is the somewhat arbitrary nature of his amendment. There's no real good way to judge who lost a house. One of the things we can look at, though, is those who asked for the help which was offered by our President which was delivered by FEMA.

They said if your house is uninhabitable or if it's gone, we'll make a trailer available for every four inhabitants. In Louisiana today, based on FEMA's numbers, there's still 49,000 FEMA trailers being occupied. In my home State, there are 24,500 FEMA trailers still being occupied. In the gentleman's State, there's 1,700 FEMA trailers being occupied.

What I have a problem with is arbitrarily taking a substantial amount of money from a State like Mississippi, that had substantially, according to this, more people lose their homes and just giving it to Texas.

Now, if the gentleman is now for the bill, that's wonderful. If the gentleman would ask the chairman to include the word "Texas" so that when this goes to conference hopefully with the other body, in the time between now and then we can find some fair way to adjudicate those claims, I think that would be wonderful.

But what I object to is literally picking a number out of the sky in a State that's got less than 1/10th of the people living in those trailers tonight, as my State, and asking for half the money that my State is getting.

I have been for this proposal. I have sat on this floor for this proposal. The gentleman has objected to this proposal.

So, again, if the gentleman wants to make the request of the chairman that somehow the words Louisiana, Texas, Alabama and Mississippi are included in there, and that between now and conference we find a fair way to distribute these funds, I'm with you. But to just pick a number out of the sky and say just because we're from Texas and we've got a huge delegation, we think we ought to get half as much money as Mississippi, even though 1/10th of the people that are in trailers in Mississippi are in trailers in Texas, I just can't buy that. That's not responsible.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word, and I'm pleased to yield to my good friend from Texas.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. I appreciate the gentleman from Georgia giving me a few minutes.

I don't know anyone who would support a housing fund that turns its back on your citizens who were devastated by the fourth largest hurricane in gulf coast history. I also don't understand a Congress that has citizens compete against each other who have both lost their homes, who aren't just living in trailers.

My people, maybe we have 1,700 living in trailers, but we have another 10 percent who don't live in trailers who can't even come back to the communities that they used to live in, can't even come back. They're not living in trailers. They've moved away. They can't come back because there is no housing.

Their only fault apparently is that they were on the wrong side of the State line for the exact same hurricane, and it seems to me I would prefer not to pick a 70 percent, a 20 percent, a 10 percent figure. I wish there were a better way to do it.

But I do know this. We ought not pit families against each other for competing for dollars that they all need and provide one on one State line all the help they can get and another, we just turn their back.

I know how much this has harmed Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. There's no question about the need there. What I'm saying, there is an equal need for each family in southeast Texas who are poor, who are predominantly Democratic counties, heavily African American communities, the ones who rely and need this housing. I just think this body ought to look at all of them equally to provide that help if we can do it.

Perhaps this body will turn its back on these people. Well, I will tell you

what, when it came to Hurricane Katrina, they didn't turn their back on the evacuees from New Orleans. One little town of 500 took in 500 evacuees on the very first night, doubled their whole population just to help. We had folks in Orange who stayed up for 72 hours straight helping people from New Orleans on buses who had lost everything and lost families. These are the same people we're turning our backs on tonight.

I don't know what the allocation is, Mr. Chairman, a fair one is. I honestly don't. I do know that we ought to provide equal help and equal hope to these communities devastated by the exact same hurricane.

Mr. WATT. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I yield to the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. WATT. Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the gentleman a question. Did the gentleman vote for the Bachus amendment that would have not provided any assistance to any of these people? Didn't the gentleman vote for that amendment?

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Reclaiming my time, I'd be glad to yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. If the question is did I vote for a housing fund that would turn its back on my communities, well, no, I did not vote for that housing fund.

Mr. WATT. Will the gentleman yield once again?

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Be pleased to. Mr. WATT. Is the gentleman saying that his community is just Texas? He's not worried about Mississippi or Louisiana, in the general context—

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Reclaiming my time, I'd be glad to yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. I don't know anyone in this body who intentionally turns their back on any communities. I do know that my district is Texas, but with redistricting I never know what State I may end up in.

But as of this moment, I know my communities well and I think, just as Mr. JEFFERSON, just as Gene and others know their communities and how much heartache they've gone through, I feel strongly that this body ought to try to help equally communities devastated by the exact same hurricane.

Our policy ought to be no second-class citizens in recovery and hurricane relief. Treat them equally for the same hurricane.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Chairman, I commend the gentleman for his amendment and urge my colleagues to adopt it.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

My problem with the answer the gentleman from Texas gave my friend from North Carolina is he voted for the amendment from the gentleman from Alabama to kill this fund before he knew whether his amendment would be accepted or not.

The gentleman says he doesn't know anybody in this body who would turn his back on communities. He has a far more limited circle of acquaintances than I would have thought for someone who had been here this long.

The fact, though, is that the amendment from the gentleman from Alabama would have, if it passed, killed the fund. The gentleman from Texas voted for it. Had he been successful in that vote, there would be no fund for him now to ask for.

Now, I thought my friend from Mississippi who has been an eloquent and passionate defender of the interests of all the people in the gulf made a very good point. As I said to the gentleman from Houston, Mr. GREEN, yes, I think we should look at the needs of Texas. We did some in the hurricane bill in terms of vouchers.

I'm prepared, if this bill gets to conference, to accommodate. We may have underestimated the physical destruction in parts of Texas. I don't think we should now pick a number, but no one had approached me. Mr. GREEN from Texas had approached me, and I said I would work with him. I would be glad to work on it.

I do think when the gentleman says we couldn't expect him to vote for a housing fund that ignored his community, he voted to abolish that fund before he knew what would happen to his amendment. Maybe he just thought the die was cast, but I'm perfectly prepared to work on this.

I hope the amendment is defeated. I don't expect the gentleman to withdraw it, and I would be glad to then look at the arguments about how much destruction there was in Texas, and I would undertake to find some way to try to help in Texas. Of course, the gentleman will probably vote against the whole bill, and if he succeeds, I won't be able to help him, but you can't help everybody all the time. All you can do is offer.

So I hope that we do get a bill through, that it has the housing fund. I hope this amendment is defeated, but I do think that when we look at the concentrated destruction in the part of Texas, something not statewide, and the reason we did Mississippi and Louisiana was we felt the destruction there was more statewide, not the whole State, but it was fairly widely distributed. It would appear there was a more narrow geographic impact in Texas, and I would think that is worth looking at.

And if the housing fund survives the four or five more Republican efforts to kill it, chop it, dice it and slice it, which are probably coming in their infinite list of amendments, and we do get it to conference, I will be glad to work with the gentleman.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BRADY).

The question was taken; and the Acting Chairman announced that the noes appeared to have it.