Gov. Perry Remarks Touring Hurricane Ike Impact Zone

Visits Brazoria and Polk Counties

*Note - Gov. Perry frequently departs from prepared remarks.

Thursday, September 18, 2008

Hurricane Ike was the biggest storm to hit Texas in recent memory and our state has responded magnificently. From moving 1.2 people out of harm’s way, to rescuing more than 9,000 people who ended up in dire circumstances, we have kept the lives of Texans as our top priority.

The winds have died down, but the folks around here know better than anyone that we have a long road to recovery ahead of us. I am confident that our state is equal to the task...because I believe people like the leaders with me here today have shown they are up to the task.

I want to thank and congratulate your local leaders for their hard work.


POLK: County Judge John Thompson, Sen. Robert Nichols, Rep. John Otto, Mayor Clarke Evans, Mayor ProTem Judy Cochran, City Manager Marilyn Sutton, Chief of Police Dennis Clifton

Here in Texas, the state works to support the people who know the situation on the ground, and your folks here have done a bang-up job, and we’re all still working hard.

Working with our private sector partners, we are working to restore power across the affected area. Every day, thousands of Texans are being reconnected with the state’s power grid. It’s tough, sometimes dangerous work, but the power crews are doing a remarkable job.

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There are tens of thousands of displaced Texans in our statewide shelter system, and countless others who are staying with friends and family across the state. I completely understand that they want to get back to their homes around here, and get busy rebuilding their lives, but we need them to be patient. I can’t over-emphasize how important it is for people to remain where they are until their neighborhoods are safe enough for their return.

There have been people working their way back into the area, before local officials have declared their areas safe. I understand where these folks are coming from, but they are placing an unnecessary burden on local resources, including food, water and fuel, and putting themselves in danger.

So I ask for our displaced fellow Texans to please be patient: we’re working ‘round the clock to get you home. You can dial 2-1-1 for updates on the timing of your return.

If you have been affected by the storm, you need to register with FEMA to make sure you get the necessary resources to rebuild. You can simply visit their Web site, www.FEMA.gov and begin the registration process for hotel reimbursement, constructions loans and the like.

If you would like to help with the recovery effort, the most important thing you can do is donate through the Texas Disaster Relief Fund. (Click here to learn more and give.)

As in every tough situation, Texans are pulling together to help their neighbors. That spirit of cooperation, our team’s extensive planning and our state’s legendary work ethic will combine to bring Texas back, better than ever.