



October 26, 2005

To: Louisiana Recovery Authority

From: PolicyLink

Re: **PolicyLink Response to LRA Scope of Work**

In response to the Scope of Work submitted to PolicyLink on Sunday, October 23, we welcome the opportunity to provide strategic advice to the Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) on setting the equity agenda to guide the State of Louisiana in its rebuilding of the parishes impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. This memo affirms our commitment to working with the LRA and provides an overview of how PolicyLink can be engaged in the process. Based on our recent conversations and PolicyLink reports and research, our equitable development approach will help advance policy in a manner that has sustainable and positive results for all Louisiana residents. As part of this effort, we will serve as a liaison to the local planning efforts in New Orleans and other Gulf Coast Parishes that will be working in partnership with the state. We will also provide regular progress reports and updates to the LRA.

We propose four key areas of activity to initiate our engagement with the LRA.

1. **Develop the Equity Policy Agenda:** Work with the State of Louisiana, the CEO of the LRA, the Director of Long-Term Planning of the LRA, and the National Planning Firm to ensure that the statewide redevelopment plan includes equity-based policies and equitable public investment.
 - a. Identify resources, research, data, policy think tanks, and consultants with substantive subject matter expertise and equity experience to advise policy development along the following fronts.
 - i. Affordable Housing
 - ii. Workforce Development
 - iii. Economic Development (including Business Development)
 - iv. Education
 - v. Environment
 - vi. Health
 - vii. Infrastructure (including transportation, utilities, and technology)
 - viii. Social Services

- b. Organize of the support of national experts on equitable development for LRA task forces and key policy makers in the State of Louisiana.
2. **Establish a Long-Term Housing Policy Agenda:** Creating and implementing an affordable housing plan that meets the needs of all Louisiana residents that want to return to the state is the cornerstone of a fair policy agenda. Where returning residents live will determine their future quality of life, including: access to high quality schools, jobs, social services, health and recreation. PolicyLink will work with state, federal, and local agencies to insure that the rebuilding of local housing markets will be a key driver of transforming neighborhoods of concentrated poverty into strong and healthy communities.
3. **Engage Louisiana Residents in the Recovery Efforts:** To insure an inclusive planning and policy development process, the citizens of Louisiana must be engaged in the recovery efforts. With many former Louisiana residents living outside of the state, PolicyLink will develop a process for including as many residents both in and out of the state in the rebuilding planning and implementation efforts. By engaging private-sector technology firms and nonprofit technology intermediaries, this could involve using the most advanced Internet communications to conduct outreach, solicit input and guidance, and shape policy. This technology-based system will be augmented with telephone and local media alternatives for those without technology literacy.
4. **Create and Implement a Media and Communications Strategy:** Through our Media and Communications Office and other communications consultants, PolicyLink will develop a strategy to keep state, federal, and local media engaged in the equitable rebuilding of the State of Louisiana. To maintain the integrity of the policy development and implementation processes, it will be essential to have sustained media coverage of every stage of the recovery process. PolicyLink, through its media networks and sharing the equitable development experience, is well-positioned to work with media outlets (newspaper, television, magazine, and Internet) to keep the needs of all Louisiana residents front and center in the coverage of Louisiana's success story.

We look forward to working together on this exciting endeavor.