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Gulf Coast Revival Fact Sheet

Part of a series of fact sheets on issues around Katrina and the Gulf Coast

Progress in the Gulf Coast: 10 Months Later

(Summarized from the Katrina Index produced by The Brookings Institution)

- Essential to the rebuilding effort of New Orleans is an adequate workforce. While the size of the labor force has experiencing growth over the last few months, it remains short of 230,000 workers from pre-Katrina numbers. Part of the increase in the workforce can be attributed to the return of displaced labor which is at 309,000. The increase of the workforce has coincided with the rise in unemployment which is currently at 6.4% despite experiencing a decline in the months immediately following the hurricanes.
- Provision of housing and other services are critical in order to absorb displaced populations. In terms of housing, the number of occupied emergency trailers and mobile homes has increased by 30,164 since the sixth month anniversary to 113,664 units; the number of households receiving rental assistance has increased by 33,350 to 678,350. These statistics are indicative of the fact that permanent housing alternatives have not been made available to returning residents. Additionally, with the housing crisis comes rental price gouging which further squeezes certain groups of residents out of the housing market.
- Despite a lack in provision of affordable rental housing, construction is booming in the city of New Orleans. Another 22,403 building permits were issued since the sixth month anniversary. Although building activity is underway in the city, critical infrastructure to compliment this reinvestment is still lagging. Infrastructure vital for residents include: hospitals, half of which are open in the City; public schools, only 18% of which are currently open; public transportation, which has remained stagnant at an operational

level of 17%; child care centers, are only at 21%,; 46% of libraries which are open; and 60% of homes in the city lack electric utility services.

- In contrast to the infrastructure for residents, infrastructure for the tourist industry seems to have received more attention with 43% of the food establishments in the metro opening and 64% of the metropolitan area's hotels being operational.

Source: Fellows, Matt; Katz, Bruce; Liu, Amy and Holmes, Nigel. "The State of New Orleans: An Update." *The New York Times*. Wednesday, July 5, 2006.