



Everything New Orleans

# The Times-Picayune

## EDITORIAL: Memo to Congress

Saturday, July 19, 2008

U.S. House leaders arriving today will witness our region's tremendous progress -- but they also will see that there's still plenty to be done.

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That can apply to the Gulf Coast's recovery agenda in Congress as well.

New Orleanians are thankful that the delegation, led by Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer and Majority Whip James Clyburn, is coming to evaluate our progress.

We also appreciate their crucial support for our region, including \$5.8 billion for levees added to recent war-funding legislation.

But Louisianians still need acute aid that was removed from that bill, chiefly a less burdensome payment schedule for the state's share of levee costs.

The current plan would force Louisiana to pay \$1.1 billion next year -- a third of the state's discretionary budget. That would wreck state services. Already, \$300 million for coastal restoration have been put on hold because of the current levee payment plan.

Congress has done a lot to help the citizens and businesses driving our region's recovery and for that they have the gratitude of Louisianians. We trust congressional leaders will see in this visit that our people still need further help.