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Madam Speaker, we are united not just in our compassion for the victims of Katrina, but a sincere interest in doing recovery right.

Republicans and Democrats, both ends of the political spectrum, can agree that we do not want some Stalinist plan imposed on a manufactured community doomed to fail.

We need the courage to be partners respectfully, the wisdom to define the role carefully, the stamina to follow through thoroughly, and the integrity to avoid partisanship. We must meet the immediate needs of the refugees affected; but we must restore communities that are stronger, safer, and more sustainable.

We must involve all Americans with the skills and concerns starting with locals, wherever they may be. We must make this a model for how to do it right because it is not just about rescuing a damaged region; it is about how to make the Federal Government more effective.