



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Donna Sanford, Disaster Recovery Division

601.359.3449

MDA NOW ACCEPTING COMMENTS ON PORT RESTORATION PROGRAM

Jackson, Miss., (September 7, 2007) -- The Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) is releasing for public comment the Port of Gulfport Restoration Program Amendment 5. This amendment would provide funding to the Mississippi State Port Authority to facilitate the restoration of public infrastructure and publicly owned facilities that were destroyed by Hurricane Katrina and provide for long-term recovery of the operating capacity of the port in a manner that could reduce future risk.

“The State of Mississippi understands that restoration of the Port of Gulfport is crucial to the economy of our state and essential to the revitalization of the Gulf Coast region,” Governor Haley Barbour said. “This funding will be an important part of helping the State Port Authority restore and enhance port infrastructure for economic development initiatives that will create jobs and improve quality of life for the citizens of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.”

It is anticipated that the remaining \$2.25 billion allocated for both Phase I and II grants will be sufficient to provide grants for the estimated 30,000 homeowners applying for the program. MDA has received approximately 27,300 applications, but does anticipate additional applicants as a result of additional outreach and recent modifications related to elevation and sold home eligibility. For that reason, MDA is proposing to redirect \$600 million of the \$2.25 billion allocated for the Homeowner Assistance Program Phase I grants to the Port of Gulfport Restoration Program.

(more)

The Mississippi Development Authority will solicit public comments on this amendment and include them, with responses, in the final plan submitted to HUD. Comments or requests for copies of the amendment may be mailed to: Mississippi Development Authority, Attention: Disaster Recovery, P.O. Box 849, Jackson, Mississippi, 39205.

Comments may also be faxed to 601.359.9280 or emailed to actioned@mississippi.org. The draft plan is available online at www.mississippi.org. Comments that are received by Monday, September 24, 2007, will be considered. Changes may be made at that time, and the final amendment to the Action Plan will be submitted to HUD for approval.

About Mississippi Development Authority

Mississippi Development Authority is the State of Mississippi's lead economic and community development agency. Nearly 300 employees are engaged in providing services to businesses, communities and workers in the state. While the agency is best known for its efforts to recruit new businesses to Mississippi, the Authority provides services to promote tourism, help communities improve their quality of place, help existing employers identify and meet opportunities and challenges and help workers improve their skills – all with the goal of improving the quality of life and economic well-being of Mississippians. For more information, visit MDA's website at www.mississippi.org.

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