

WASHINGTON, DC - Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD), who is on a trip through the Gulf Coast this week, released the following statement today in observance of the first anniversary of Hurricane Katrina:

"Today is a somber day for our nation. It is a time to grieve for those who died in Hurricane Katrina and in the flood waters that followed. It is a time to recommit ourselves to those who lost all that they possessed. It is also a time to assess our progress in rebuilding.

"Democrats are visiting the Gulf Coast this week to demonstrate once again our commitment to aiding the survivors of Hurricane Katrina. I am disappointed by the slow delivery of the help that was promised, but heartened by the optimism and determination of those who have been forced to rebuild their lives.

"One year ago, our nation was shocked by images of Americans stranded in flood waters and left without food and water for days. The government's incompetence infuriated the country, and it fundamentally altered Americans' views of their leaders.

"Despite their frustration, Americans rallied to the side of their fellow citizens. But the job is far from finished. As the young people at Chalmette High School sang today, 525,600 minutes ago disaster struck the Gulf Coast, and it has not yet been made whole. We must marshal all the resources of this wealthy nation to rebuild the lives and dreams of our fellow Americans."

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