



ABRAHAM LINCOLN PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY & MUSEUM

For Immediate Release:

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Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum Raises More Than \$50,000 for the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund

SPRINGFIELD, IL: The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum and the American Red Cross raised \$50,000 dollars for Hurricane Katrina victims, thanks to weekend museum goers. Over the three-day Labor Day weekend, free admission to the museum was offered to all visitors who made a donation to the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund.

"I've always said that the ALPLM could be a vital part of the community. In this case, the community is continental. We invited our neighbors in and around Springfield to help our neighbors in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast," said Richard Norton Smith, Executive Director of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

Smith wrote a personal check for \$2,500 on Saturday to the American Red Cross to kick off the fundraiser.

"By donating to the Red Cross, instead of paying the cost of admission, Illinoisans showed the people of the Gulf States that Illinois cares and is doing whatever we can to help."

Officials believe that Hurricane Katrina will be more costly than Hurricane Andrew, the previous record-breaking hurricane of 1992. In response, the American Red Cross has launched the largest mobilization of resources for a single natural disaster, involving thousands of trained disaster relief workers, tons of supplies, and shoulders on which to lean.

The American Red Cross anticipates a sustained disaster relief effort, unlike any other in our history, lasting many months. Already, the Red Cross has provided a safe haven for nearly 150,000 evacuees in more than 485 Red Cross shelters in 18 states. Early estimates indicate that this response could cost as much or more than the sum of the four combined hurricanes during last year's hurricane, which cost approximately \$130 million. The peak of the Atlantic hurricane season is still to come.

American Red Cross disaster assistance is free, made possible by voluntary donations of time and money from the American people. You can help the victims of this and thousands of other disasters across the country each year by making a financial gift to the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund, which enables the Red Cross to provide shelter, food, counseling and other assistance to those in need. Call 1-800-HELP NOW or 1-800-257-7575 (Spanish). Contributions to the Disaster Relief Fund may be sent to your local American Red Cross chapter (Illinois Capital Area Chapter, 1025 S. 6th St., Springfield, IL, 62703) or to the American Red Cross, P. O. Box 37243, Washington, DC 20013. Internet users can make a secure online contribution by visiting www.redcross.org.

Since Hurricane Katrina made landfall on August 29th, Gov. Blagojevich ordered all state agencies to respond in a coordinated manner to help both the recovery and cleanup efforts in the Gulf Coast, and the victims coming into Illinois. Illinois' efforts to date include:

- Gov. Blagojevich deployed of nearly 1,100 more Illinoisans to help Louisiana respond to the devastation resulting from Hurricane Katrina. The latest deployments include nearly 600 firefighters who left Monday and 500 National Guard troops that are preparing to depart for Louisiana on Wednesday. This latest deployment brings to 800 the number of Illinois National Guard troops sent to

Louisiana.

- The Governor sent 134 highly trained law enforcement officers from state and local agencies were deployed to Louisiana. These include Weapons of Mass Destruction teams, Tactical Response teams, Underwater Dive teams, a mobile command post, various all terrain vehicles, boats and trucks. The Illinois Department of Transportation contributed 500 yards of fencing and 500 stakes on two lowboys pulled by two semis that will be in the law enforcement convoy.
- The Governor dispatched 52 members of the Illinois Medical Emergency Response Teams (IMERT) to Louisiana to assist with care of the massive number of sick and injured victims from Hurricane Katrina.
- The Governor dispatched an 11-member Incident Management Team to George County, Mississippi for 14 days to assist local emergency managers during the crisis.
- The Governor directed the Illinois National Guard to send more than 300 soldiers and fifty military vehicles to assist in Hurricane Katrina cleanup efforts. The soldiers assembled in Springfield and left for Louisiana this morning.
- The Governor ordered the state's public schools to waive residency requirements and enroll any child displaced by Hurricane Katrina who relocates to live with family, friends or in a shelter in Illinois. To date, the Illinois State Board of Education has received requests from some 30 students that will be placed in school districts in Belleville, Peoria, Wheaton, Metro East, South Cook (Lansing) and Whiteside County.
- The state's public universities are providing accommodations for college students displaced by the hurricane. The state's 39 community colleges will accommodate any Illinois resident displaced from higher education studies because of the hurricane, while Illinois' 12 public universities will also take in students affected by the destruction along the Gulf Coast. Students are encouraged to contact admissions offices at each university to being an expedited process to enroll in the institution and to access university services like financial aid.
- The Department of Natural Resources and the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency are offering free camping and have removed length of stay requirements for Hurricane victims at all state parks and historic sites that offer camping.

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