

Louisiana to fund part of Katrina recovery

by UPI

BATON ROUGE, La. -- Louisiana Gov. Kathleen Blanco plans to allocate \$600 million to \$700 million in state funds to help cover a shortfall in a hurricane rebuilding program.

The Road Home program is intended to rebuild residential areas devastated by hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. Shortfalls in the program are estimated to be anywhere from \$3 billion to \$5 billion, which could leave many applicants without necessary help, The New Orleans Times-Picayune reported Sunday.

Marie Centanni, Blanco's press secretary, told the newspaper the governor does not yet know where the money will come from, but she said Blanco made the commitment with the expectation that the program will yield federal funds.

The shortfall in the Road Home program has been a source of anxiety among federal, state and local officials, the newspaper said.

Centanni said Louisiana is spending \$4.6 billion of its own money on hurricane recovery. Also, the Times-Picayune reported, the state has a multibillion investment in long-term coastal restoration and hurricane protection programs.

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