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U.S. DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF LA
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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA**

**DASHA CORNER AND GREATER
NEW ORLEANS FAIR HOUSING ACTION**

**CIVIL ACTION
NO. 06-10751**

VERSUS

**THE HOUSING AUTHORITY OF NEW
ORLEANS AND LGD RENTAL 1, LLC,
doing business as RIVER GARDEN
APARTMENTS**

SECTION M

PER CURIAM:

The Court is indebted to Magistrate Judge Sally Shushan and the attorneys in this case for painstakingly fashioning an even-handed, impartial and essentially equitable arrangement as set forth in the attached Consent Decree approved and signed this date.

However, this Court feels compelled to make the following observations in connection therewith:

Following Hurricane Katrina, LGD Rental 1, LLC (HRI/River Garden) leased low income units reserved for former St. Thomas residents to management employees of the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO). These leases were renewed in March 2006, for an additional six months allowing HANO management employees to stay in these units until September 30, 2006 at a rate designed solely for low-income occupants.

This Court believes that the "us first" attitude at HANO and HRI/River Gardens, who spent excessive amounts of time and expense serving their own management, created an un-level playing field for former St. Thomas residents.

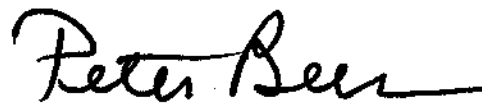
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The central tragedy here is that their callous and indifferent "leadership" was not unlike that which stalked our city generally after Hurricane Katrina. That same, self-serving, uncaring, "pass the buck" bureaucratic swampland followed the examples set by city, state and federal officials. It was carried out with the same indifference and lack of leadership so apparent over most of the scene of suffering following the storm.

A thread runs through the protestations of the defendants not unlike those of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), City Hall, and a host of other agencies who performed poorly following Katrina. The scorn and incompetence visited upon those citizens in such perilous need set a new low for federally-supported agencies, whose very reason for existence was to provide decent low-income housing. HANO management itself occupied those premises which were available or were made available for more than a year following the storm, at a rental rate obviously set for low-income or no-income renters, all the while playing bureaucratic games with those whose lack of education or understanding left them essentially without an avenue of relief.

Here in this battered old city, we have seen unfaithfulness in public positions at every level - national, state and local. Leadership at HANO and HRI/River Gardens was no exception. Except in very few isolated and ineffectual instances, no hands-on concern or self-sacrifice ever appeared on this nightmare scene. Expediency, self-serving actions, and a lack of meaningful assistance or encouragement to those most in need was the order of the day.

New Orleans, Louisiana, this 5th day of July 2007.



Peter Beer
United States District Judge