

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 3, 2006

For further Information, Contact:

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FAYETTEVILLE – Cumberland County has received \$29,222 from the North Carolina Helping Neighbors Fund to assist Hurricane Katrina evacuees residing in the community.

The criteria for distribution of the funds are clear. Counties may not use any portion of the NC Helping Neighbors Fund for administrative expenses; counties must establish a cap on the amount distributed per evacuee household and; counties must distribute the funds to each Hurricane Katrina evacuee household based on specific need or needs.

Cumberland County Department of Social Services is administering the funds locally. To qualify as a Hurricane Katrina evacuee household, applicants for these funds must be registered with FEMA, and present correspondence with their name and FEMA number. In Cumberland County, these funds will be limited to mortgage or rent assistance, on a one-time only basis, and capped at \$600. Utilities assistance will also be available with the presentation of an outstanding bill, to a \$300 maximum.

In order to make Hurricane Katrina evacuees aware of the NC Helping Neighbors Fund, Cumberland County DSS is contacting schools, the Salvation Army, Fayetteville Urban Ministry, churches and the last known address of Hurricane Katrina evacuees.

The opportunity for Hurricane Katrina evacuees to apply for these funds continues until 5 p.m. on March 31, 2006.

The NC Helping Neighbors Fund is being managed by United Way of North Carolina, which has issued the \$29,222 check to Cumberland County, based on a spreadsheet provided by Governor Mike Easley's office. These funds are private contributions donated by many businesses and individuals across the state of North Carolina in response to Hurricane Katrina

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