

## HURRICANE IAN

# A half-mile swim, a glimmer of hope



ANGELICA EDWARDS | Times  
Kevin Guthrie, director of the Florida Division of Emergency Management, speaks at a news conference.

## At least 1,700 still in shelters

In Ian's aftermath, state officials are making plans for emergency housing.

BY ANA CEBALLOS  
Times/Herald Tallahassee Bureau

TALLAHASSEE — At least 1,700 people remain in emergency shelters five days after Hurricane Ian ravaged the Southwest Florida coast and parts of Central Florida, a figure that demonstrates the enormity of the post-hurricane crisis as recovery efforts are underway.

It remains unclear how many of those people lost their homes in the storm, but state officials on Monday morning said they are making plans for emergency housing.

The next phase will be to consolidate the number of shelters in each county and move people to short-term shelters. Currently, there are 27 shelters across 12 counties. Many of those shelters are schools.

Then, the Federal Emergency Management Agency will take the lead in coordinating the availability of trailers, which will serve as temporary housing for people who are in need of it, said Kevin Guthrie, Florida's emergency management director. Hotels may also serve as temporary shelters, he said.

"We've got to determine how many people we have in that bucket and will start moving to that very quickly," Guthrie said.

As the state starts to make plans for transitional housing, Guthrie said there are challenges in some of the hardest-hit counties, specifically Lee County, where he said water service has not yet been restored to some hotels.

The state has hired a firm to start restoring water to those hotels and other buildings and households. Guthrie said the goal is to restore water by Sunday to all customers who have the infrastructure to receive it.

The same goes for power, Guthrie said. The goal is to restore power by Sunday for all customers whose power lines and infrastructure can still receive electricity, he said.

As recovery efforts remain  
**See SHELTERS, 14A**



Photos courtesy of Johnny Lauder

By the time Johnny Lauder got to his mother, Karen, her house looked like a fishbowl, with water over 4 feet deep.

His mom rode out the storm in Naples. When her house began to flood, he jumped out a window and waded to her rescue.



Johnny Lauder and his 84-year-old mom, Karen. "I have my mom, my sons and my job. So I still have my hope," he said.

BY MARÍA LUISA PAÚL  
The Washington Post

As Hurricane Ian battered Florida last week, leaving neighborhoods in Naples looking like they had been swallowed by a river, Johnny Lauder dove into the murky, debris-filled waters that others were trying to escape.

The 49-year-old was on a mission to save his 84-year-old mother, who uses a wheelchair. She lives a few blocks away and had made a panicked call Wednesday as the water rushing into her house reached her chest.

"If I would've waited, she

### Fleeing 'ground zero'

Fort Myers Beach residents continue to exit the devastated island by foot. **Page 10A**

wouldn't be here," Lauder said. "And that's my mom. I would've done it for anybody's mom or anyone else in that situation. You know, that's what you're supposed to do."

Naples faced a ferocious storm surge that swamped houses, knocked down power lines and "left the downtown area looking like Atlantis," Lauder said. Under those conditions, the former Chicago **See RESCUE, 12A**

# How DeSantis, Rubio voted on Sandy aid

Both Republicans have requested help from President Joe Biden amid Ian's catastrophic damage.



BY AMY SHERMAN  
PolitiFact

When a hurricane strikes Florida, it provides a rare moment when Republican and Democratic politicians agree on policy: They all want federal money to help the state recover from devastation.

When Hurricane Ian hit Florida, U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio, a Republican, joined Florida's full congressional delegation in signing a letter to President Joe Biden seeking a major disaster declaration, which allows for temporary aid. Gov. Ron DeSantis, also a Republican, sent a similar letter.

The requests from the Republicans for help from a Democratic president and administration prompted many Twitter users to suggest that Rubio and DeSantis are hypocrites. They said the Republicans opposed federal relief for New York and New Jersey after Hurricane Sandy battered those states in 2012.

"Just a reminder to New York ... Marco Rubio and Ron DeSantis (who was then in Congress) voted against aid for Hurricane Sandy. But because we are New

York, we care about everyone," tweeted Yuh-Line Niou, a Democrat who represents areas of Manhattan in the New York Assembly. "Even when they don't care about us."

Craig Fugate, a former director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, said Hurricane Ian could be "one of the highest losses in hurricanes in recent U.S. history." One early estimate said property damage losses could be \$40 billion.

The major disaster declaration Biden signed Thursday unlocks the Disaster Relief Fund so FEMA can provide immediate aid, including temporary housing assistance. The declaration will result in billions of dollars flowing to Florida, said Steve Ellis, president of the government spending watchdog group Taxpayers for Common Sense. But if lawmakers want to provide more relief, they will need to pass supplemental appropriations.

When asked to back up Niou's claim, her spokesperson pointed to articles about Rubio's vote against Hurricane Sandy aid. We looked at multiple votes by the lawmakers and news analysis to get a more complete picture of their **See POLITIFACT, 14A**



ALIE SKOWRONSKI | Miami Herald

As a newly elected congressman, Ron DeSantis voted against both Hurricane Sandy relief packages in 2013.



JABIN BOTSFORD | The Washington Post

Republican Sen. Marco Rubio voted against a larger aid bill after Sandy but supported less extensive bills.

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