Gov. Kathleen Blanco’s proposed housing program for hurricane victims cleared two legislative committees Tuesday after one panel balked at banning aid for the homes of felons.

Several legislators said they fear felons’ family members would wind up homeless because of their relative’s criminal past.

“We don’t want widows and children out on the street,” Rep. John Alario, D-Westwego, said.

Rep. John LaBruzzo, R-Metairie, told the House Committee on Appropriations that he would defer his felons’ bill to work on it.

The committee had an easier time with House Concurrent Resolution No. 155, which calls for spending $7.5 billion to rebuild, repair and buy out homes in the areas affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Officials with the Louisiana Recovery Authority spent more than an hour Tuesday explaining the details of the housing proposal to the Joint Legislative Committee on the Budget.

The committees met back to back to advance the governor’s housing proposal through the legislative process. The next stop is the Senate Committee on Finance. The proposal also must be approved by the full Legislature and the federal government.

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita destroyed or severely damaged more than 122,000 homes owned by the occupants, state officials say.

Blanco’s proposal would set the ceiling on homeowner assistance with uninsured damages at $150,000.

Owners who sell out to the state would get 60 percent of their homes’ pre-storm value.

In calculating assistance, insurance payments and aid from the Federal Emergency Management Agency would be deducted.

The LRA’s executive director, Andy Kopplin, told the budget committee he hopes storm victims will start receiving checks by late summer.