

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 30, 2005

The Honorable Michael Chertoff
Secretary of Homeland Security
Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Chertoff:

As part of the Select Bipartisan Committee's investigation into the preparation for and response to Hurricane Katrina, we are writing to request important documents from the Department of Homeland Security.

Specifically, we request:

1. Documents or communications, including internal communications, received, prepared, or sent before August 23, 2005, by officials of the Department of Homeland Security or any of its constituent agencies relating to the threat posed by a hurricane striking New Orleans or the Gulf Coast, mitigation measures or projects, emergency preparations, or emergency responses;
2. Documents or communications, including internal communications, received, prepared, or sent between August 23 and August 29, 2005, by officials of the Department of Homeland Security or any of its constituent agencies relating to the threat posed by Hurricane Katrina, mitigation measures or projects, emergency preparations, or emergency responses;
3. Documents or communications, including internal communications, received, prepared, or sent between August 29 and September 15, 2005, by officials of the Department of Homeland Security or any of its constituent agencies relating to the impact of Hurricane Katrina, mitigation measures or projects, emergency preparations, or emergency responses.

In responding to this request, we ask that you give first priority to providing responsive documents or communications, including internal communications, received, prepared, or sent by officials in the Office of the Secretary and the Office of the Under Secretary of Emergency Preparedness and Response. We are not requesting at this time documents or communications between officials of the Department of Homeland Security or any of its constituent agencies and individual members of the general public.

The Honorable Michael Chertoff
September 30, 2005
Page 2

Thank you for your assistance with this request. We are aware of the many demands on your time as you cope with the impacts of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The Select Committee, however, has been given a short deadline for its work. For this reason, we ask that you respond to this letter within two weeks if possible.

Sincerely,



Tom Davis
Chairman



Charles Melancon
Member of Congress