

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 11, 2009

The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson  
Chairman  
House Committee on Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Thompson:

We are writing to request a hearing to be held to examine how federal hurricane assistance has changed since 2005. Like you, we are Members from a coastal state that has been affected by hurricanes. We have also been involved in Congressional oversight of disaster relief on our Committee from Rep. McCaul's first term as Chairman of the Management, Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee investigating waste, fraud and abuse after Hurricane Katrina to both of us seeing first hand our first responders in action in the aftermath of Hurricane Ike last year.

We are specifically interested in comparing how processes, regulations and procedures at FEMA and other federal programs were different between Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Ike and the extent to which these differences are responsible for the great disparity in the number of individuals served, amounts of assistance paid and the estimated amount of waste, fraud and abuse. While some of these changes have no doubt increased efficiency and decreased waste, the disparity suggests a possible overcorrection resulting in lack of assistance and diminished quality of service. It is incumbent upon us to examine this.

We fully appreciate and understand that Hurricane Katrina was a much larger and deadlier disaster with higher attendant costs and it caused far more people to be displaced for longer periods of time. We believe, however, that we can control for these disparities and that a close comparison of the federal response to these two natural disasters would provide valuable insight into how we can better legislate and provide oversight.

Sincerely,



Michael T. McCaul  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Intelligence,  
Information Sharing, and  
Terrorism Risk Assessment



Pete Olson  
Member  
House Committee on Homeland Security

cc: Honorable Peter T. King, Ranking Member, Committee on Homeland Security