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requirement. This request responds to urgent needs associated with immediate response and recovery efforts associated with Hurricane Katrina in Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, and other affected areas.

The enclosed request requires immediate action by the Congress to ensure that the Federal response to this disaster continues uninterrupted. I anticipate making a further request in the coming weeks that will provide for a comprehensive response and recovery effort after fully assessing the impact of the hurricane. The details of this request are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

Remarks on Departure for a Tour of Gulf Coast Areas Damaged by Hurricane Katrina

September 2, 2005

Secretary Chertoff and I just finished a meeting with Secretary Rumsfeld, General Myers, other members of my Cabinet, as well as General Honore, Admiral Keating, who is in charge of NORTHCOM—General Honore is our active duty general on the ground in Louisiana as well—and Mike Brown, who is the head of FEMA.

There's a lot of aid surging toward those who have been affected, millions of gallons of water, millions of tons of food. We're making progress about pulling people out of the Superdome. There's an issue right now at the convention center of New Orleans that General Honore briefed us on. We're trying to get food and medicine to the convention center. He's working with the Governor and the adjutant general and the mayor to deploy 600 of the newly arrived MPs to secure the site, so that the food and medicine and water can get in there.

A lot of people are working hard to help those who've been affected, and I want to thank the people for their efforts. The results are not acceptable. I'm headed down there right now. I'm looking forward to talking to the people on the ground. I want to assure the people of the affected areas and this country that we'll deploy the assets necessary to get the situation under control, to get the help to the people who've been affected, and that we're beginning long-term planning to help those who have been displaced, as well as long-term planning to help rebuild the communities that have been affected.

I'm looking forward to my trip down there and looking forward to thanking those on the ground and looking forward to assure people that we'll get on top of this situation, and we're going to help people who need help.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:02 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana; Lt. Gen. Russel L. Honore, USA, commanding general, First United States Army; Maj. Gen. Bennett C. Landreneau, Adjutant General for Louisiana; and Mayor Ray Nagin of New Orleans, LA.

Remarks on the Aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in Mobile, Alabama

September 2, 2005

The President. Well, first I want to say a few things. I am incredibly proud of our Coast Guard. We have got courageous people risking their lives to save life. And I want to thank the commanders, and I want to thank the troops over there for representing the best of America.

I want to congratulate the Governors for being leaders. You didn't ask for this when you swore in, but you're doing a heck of a job. And the Federal Government's job is big, and it's massive, and we're going to do it. Where it's not working right, we're going to make it right. Where it is working right, we're going to duplicate it elsewhere. We have a responsibility at the Federal level to help save life, and that's the primary focus right now. Every life is precious, and so we're going to spend a lot of time saving lives, whether it be in New Orleans or on the coast of Mississippi.

We have a responsibility to help clean up this mess, and I want to thank the Congress for acting as quickly as you did. Step one is to appropriate $10.5 billion. But I've got to warn everybody, that's just the beginning.

That's a small downpayment for the cost of this effort to help the good folks here rebuild.

We are going to restore order in the city of New Orleans, and we're going to help supplement the efforts of the Mississippi Guard and others to restore order in parts of Mississippi. And I want to thank you for your strong statement of zero tolerance. The people of this country expect there to be law and order, and we're going to work hard to get it. In order to make sure there's less violence, we've got to get food to people. And that's a primary mission, is to get food to people. And there's a lot of food moving. And now the—it's one thing to get it moving to a station; it's the next thing to get it in the hands of the people. And that's where we're going to spend a lot of time focusing.

We've got a lot of rebuilding to do. First, we're going to save lives and stabilize the situation, and then we're going to help these communities rebuild. The good news is—and it's hard for some to see it now—that out of this chaos is going to come a fantastic Gulf Coast, like it was before. Out of the rubbles of Trent Lott's house—he's lost his entire house—there's going to be a fantastic house. And I'm looking forward to sitting on the porch. [*Laughter*]

Governor Bob Riley. He'll be glad to have you.

The President. Out of New Orleans is going to come that great city again. That's what's going to happen. But now we're in the darkest days, and so we got a lot of work to do. And I'm down here to thank people. I'm down here to comfort people. I'm down here to let people know that we're going to work with the States and the local folks with a strategy to get this thing solved.

Now, I also want to say something about the compassion of the people of Alabama and Mississippi and Louisiana and surrounding States. I want to thank you for your compassion. Now is the time to love a neighbor like you'd like to be loved yourself.

Governor Riley announced the fact that they're going to open up homes in military bases for stranded folks. And that's going to be very important and helpful.

My dad and Bill Clinton are going to raise money for Governors' funds. The Governors of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama will have monies available to them to help deal with the long-term consequences of this storm.

The faith-based groups and the community-based groups throughout this part of the world and the country, for that matter, are responding. If you want to help, give cash money to the Red Cross and the Salvation Army. That's where the first help will come. There's going to be plenty of opportunities to help later on, but right now the immediate concern is to save lives and get food and medicine to people so we can stabilize the situation.

Again, I want to thank you all for—and Brownie, you're doing a heck of a job. The FEMA Director is working 24—they're working 24 hours a day.

Again, my attitude is, if it's not going exactly right, we're going to make it go exactly right. If there's problems, we're going to address the problems. And that's what I've come down to assure people of. And again, I want to thank everybody.

And I'm not looking forward to this trip. I got a feel for it when I flew over before. It—for those who have not—trying to conceive what we're talking about, it's as if the entire Gulf Coast were obliterated by a—the worst kind of weapon you can imagine. And now we're going to go try to comfort people in that part of the world.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:35 a.m. at the Mobile Regional Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco of Louisiana; Gov. Haley Barbour of Mississippi; and Gov. Bob Riley of Alabama.

Remarks Following a Walking Tour of Areas Damaged by Hurricane Katrina and an Exchange With Reporters in Biloxi, Mississippi

September 2, 2005

The President. I'm proud to be here with the Mayor of Biloxi. The reason I'm proud to be here with him and with the Governor and Senators is because in spite of this terrible tragedy, their spirits are high. It's hard to describe the devastation that we have just walked through. I just talked to a fellow who