

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2005

SENATORS COLLINS, LIEBERMAN HOLD KATRINA HEARING, ACTING FEMA DIRECTOR TESTIFIES

WASHINGTON, DC- Senator Susan Collins, Chairman of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, and Ranking Member Joseph Lieberman, today held the third hearing related to Hurricane Katrina and the Committee's investigation. David Paulison, who is the Acting Director for FEMA, testified and provided the Committee with an update of how FEMA is performing its mission at this stage of the recovery. The hearing focused on whether the agency is providing relief to Katrina victims in an efficient manner while spending taxpayer dollars wisely.

During the hearing, Senators Collins and Lieberman acknowledged that while many at all levels of government are working tirelessly to help rebuild lives and communities damaged in the storm, they remain concerned with FEMA's response. In addition, Senators Collins and Lieberman questioned several instances of apparent government waste. Senator Collins asked about ice, ordered by FEMA to be delivered to the Gulf Coast region following Hurricane Katrina, that instead were diverted to different regions of the country, including 250 truckloads that were shipped to Portland, Maine at an approximate cost of \$800 a day. In addition, several instances were highlighted where manufactured homes for victims left homeless from the hurricane remain vacant while victims still live in emergency shelters.

“Minor oversights and inevitable glitches are to be expected, but the more glaring failures appear to be the result of insufficient planning, faulty decisions, ineffective implementation, or an overwhelmed bureaucracy,” Senator Collins said.

“This is a recovery and rebuilding of the Gulf Coast that is unprecedented in our history. We have to get it right for millions of our fellow Americans and it requires quick, concerted action,” said Senator Lieberman.

Today’s hearing was the third held by the committee in conjunction with its Katrina investigation. The Senators also recently requested extensive documents from the government to assist further in the investigation.