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# SENATOR COLLINS PUSHES FEMA TO UPDATE PAYROLL RECORD SYSTEM

Washington, DC – U.S. Senator Susan Collins today called on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to quickly deploy an improved payroll system in the wake of a report showing discrepancies between the number of individuals deployed to disasters and the corresponding payroll entries. Senator Collins is the ranking member on the committee that oversees the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and FEMA, the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

DHS's Inspector General reviewed the FEMA payroll database for its on-call employees who deploy as needed to assist with disasters. Reviewing records from January 1, 2005, through September 30, 2009, the report revealed that seven percent of the records did not match. In other words, individuals appear to have been paid without a corresponding record of their work. Some of these payments may have been based on legitimate deployments; however, given the lack of a supporting electronic record, it was impossible confirm.

"I am disappointed to learn of yet another example of FEMA's mishandling of taxpayer dollars," said Senator Collins. "DHS's Office of Inspector General found a discrepancy rate of seven percent in FEMA's payroll database, which keeps a record of the temporary workers who deploy at a moment's notice to our nation's emergencies. Over four and a half years, about 4,200 individuals were paid more than \$64 million for deployments not accounted for in FEMA's records.

“Although some of these payments may have been legitimate, it is hard to tell with such poor record keeping. I urge FEMA to deploy a new system quickly to prevent future improper payments.”

Senator Collins also recently learned that \$643 million in disaster assistance payments after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita was paid out improperly. In a letter, she stressed to the head of FEMA that the Administration must act now to reclaim these payments.

[Report linked here. \(http://www.hsgac.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Files.View&FileStore\\_id=b1fd249e-5c07-45e2-842b-2c75ff22ff7d\)](http://www.hsgac.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Files.View&FileStore_id=b1fd249e-5c07-45e2-842b-2c75ff22ff7d)

[http://www.hsgac.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Files.View&FileStore\\_id=b1fd249e-5c07-45e2-842b-2c75ff22ff7d](http://www.hsgac.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Files.View&FileStore_id=b1fd249e-5c07-45e2-842b-2c75ff22ff7d)

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