

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4209

To temporarily deny Federal assistance to the City of Gretna Police Department, the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office, and the Crescent City Connection Division Police Department in the State of Louisiana for their maltreatment of individuals seeking aid during the Hurricane Katrina crisis, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 2, 2005

Ms. MCKINNEY introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To temporarily deny Federal assistance to the City of Gretna Police Department, the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office, and the Crescent City Connection Division Police Department in the State of Louisiana for their maltreatment of individuals seeking aid during the Hurricane Katrina crisis, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress finds the following:

1 (1) American law enforcement has a funda-
2 mental duty to provide compassion, aid, and safety
3 to the people it serves.

4 (2) A primary function of law enforcement is to
5 preserve life, regardless of the race, ethnicity, reli-
6 gion, social or economic standing, sexual preference,
7 or country of origin of the individuals involved.

8 (3) During the period of August 26 through
9 September 2, 2005, Hurricane Katrina ravaged the
10 gulf area, including the cities of New Orleans and
11 Gretna, Louisiana, and left thousands of individuals
12 in danger of death and immense suffering.

13 (4) On or about September 1, 2005, New Orle-
14 ans authorities directed a group of individuals to
15 evacuate New Orleans by crossing the Crescent City
16 Connection Bridge, which spans the Mississippi
17 River and links New Orleans to the west bank of
18 Gretna.

19 (5) Following these directions, the individuals,
20 by all accounts an orderly group of men, women,
21 and children, began their dangerous trek through
22 streets flooded with contaminated water and littered
23 with debris and corpses in an effort to reach safety.

24 (6) As the group approached the bridge, shots
25 were fired, and members of the Gretna law enforce-

1 ment agencies confronted, threatened, and pointed
2 their weapons at the group, thus preventing the
3 group's entrance into the Gretna area.

4 (7) It is unacceptable to permit anything but
5 the strongest response to the actions of the Gretna
6 law enforcement agencies, which prevented the
7 group's lawful exodus from a life-threatening situa-
8 tion.

9 (8) The behavior and silence of members of the
10 Gretna law enforcement agencies are a disgrace to
11 the efforts of law enforcement agencies throughout
12 the United States and shall not be tolerated.

13 (9) Since there is no dispute that members of
14 each entity of the Gretna law enforcement agencies
15 referred to in section 4 were present during the
16 events described in this section, each such entity
17 should be equally held accountable, regardless of
18 which members actually fired shots or ordered the
19 group to turn back.

20 **SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

21 It is the sense of Congress that the dishonorable ac-
22 tions referred to in section 1 should be recorded and con-
23 demned.

1 **SEC. 3. INELIGIBILITY FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—During the 1-year period begin-
3 ning on the date of enactment of this Act, the Gretna law
4 enforcement agencies shall be ineligible to participate in
5 any Federal program, whether by funding, assistance, con-
6 tract, grant, personnel support, or otherwise.

7 (b) LICENSES.—During the 1-year period beginning
8 on the date of enactment of this Act, any Federal license
9 issued to the Gretna law enforcement agencies shall be
10 suspended.

11 (c) EQUIPMENT.—Gretna law enforcement agencies
12 shall immediately return all Federally-owned equipment in
13 the possession or use of the Gretna law enforcement agen-
14 cies to the appropriate Federal agency .

15 **SEC. 4. GRETNA LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES DEFINED.**

16 In this Act, the term “Gretna law enforcement agen-
17 cies” means the following entities in the State of Lou-
18 isiana:

- 19 (1) The City of Gretna Police Department.
20 (2) The Jefferson Parish Sheriff’s Office.
21 (3) The Crescent City Connection Division Po-
22 lice Department.

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