

instruction programs to ensure that every child can read by the end of the third grade. Also included is \$104 million for the Early Reading First Program which funds programs that support activities in existing pre-school programs designed to enhance the verbal bills, phonological awareness, letter knowledge, pre-reading skills and early language development of children ages 3 through 5. To help struggling middle and high school students improve their reading skills the bill includes \$35 million.

For community learning centers activities, such as before and afterschool, recreational, drug, violence prevention and family literacy programs, the bill includes \$991 million for 21st Century Community Learning Centers.

The bill provides \$306.5 million for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs. These funds will be used to assist high schools to help low-income students prepare for and pursue postsecondary education.

To improve post-secondary education opportunities for low-income, first-generation college students, the committee recommendation provides \$836.5 million for the TRIO program, to assist in more intensive outreach and support services for low income youth.

The bill includes \$217 million for charter school grants which help in the planning, development and implementation of charter schools. Funding for this important program has more than doubled since fiscal year 1999.

Also included is \$26 million for voluntary public school choice to expand programs, especially for parents whose children attend low-performing public schools.

For student aid programs, the bill provides \$15.1 billion, an increase of \$838 million over last year's amount. Pell grants, the cornerstone of student financial aid is funded at \$4,050. The bill also includes \$4.3 billion to pay off the estimated Pell grant shortfall. The bill also includes an increase of \$26 million for the supplemental educational opportunity grants program.

In this Nation, we know all too well that unemployment wastes valuable talent and potential, and ultimately weakens our economy. The bill before us today provides \$5.25 billion for job training programs. This includes \$1.58 billion for the Job Corps; \$893 million for adult training; and \$1.47 billion for retraining dislocated workers.

The bill provides \$1.55 billion for worker protection programs. While progress has been made in this area, there are still far too many work-related injuries and illnesses. The funds provided will continue the programs that inspect business and industry, assist employers in weeding out occupational hazards and protect workers' pay and pensions.

There are many other notable accomplishments in this bill, but for the sake of time, I mentioned just several of the key highlights, so that the Nation may grasp the scope and importance of this bill.

In closing, I again thank Senator HARKIN and his staff and the other Senators on the subcommittee for their cooperation.

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I have been asked by the distinguished majority leader to propound a unanimous consent request.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. SPECTER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SPECTER. I say, this is a license for Senators not to bring amendments to the floor on this bill, but this license is short lived. It is not going to last too long.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate for 1 hour.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator is recognized.

Mr. GRASSLEY. And for other Senators who may want to speak, I may be a little less than an hour or I may be a little more than an hour. I do not intend to be here forever, just in case my colleagues are wondering.

#### HURRICANE KATRINA

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise to discuss the situation in Louisiana, particularly New Orleans, as it relates to the Katrina hurricane. I do that because of a very devoted constituent by the name of Craig Van Waardhuizen of 3716 Pearl Lane, Waterloo, IA. We are members of Prairie Lakes Church, Cedar Falls, IA, a Baptist church. He approached me because he had bad experiences in trying to help people in Louisiana at the height of the hurricane and the period of time thereafter.

He says things just were not right. That is quite obvious to all of the country. I had a chance to hear it from a person who witnessed it. He kept a diary of his experiences. He is a sincere enough individual to spend time with me, sincere enough individual to put things down in writing, and he is a sincere enough person who would like to have things that happened to him not happen again in a future natural disaster.

So I promised my friend in Waterloo that I would make sure the entire Senate knew of his situation. It will be on record for people to refer to so corrective action can be taken.

I suppose most of this falls in the area of FEMA's responsibility, but I am not so sure but what some of it doesn't fall into the area of local responders and to State people as well. But FEMA is the one most referred to. So I am going to spend my time reading word for word from this diary so that people will know the trials and tribulations of one bus driver, trying to

help people all the way from Iowa, going to Louisiana to help people there who had problems.

This starts on September 1, which is the Thursday after Katrina hit. I believe Katrina hit either on that Saturday or Sunday, the 27th or 28th of August. Presumably some time after Katrina hit, my constituent friend was desiring to help the people in need there. He was affiliated with a bus company that could provide transportation. This starts on September 1, but presumably on the days of Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday before September 1, he was trying to get involved in helping:

September 1, 2005, Thursday: Another day of searching on the internet and contacting our motorcoach associations has brought no success as we (Northwest Iowa Transportation, Inc.) look for ways to help in New Orleans. We have coaches and drivers available to go help in moving people out of the New Orleans area. However, we do not believe that we should just drive down to New Orleans without any contact. It is discouraging when you want to help and yet can't find the avenue to help.

September 2, Friday: There is a light in the tunnel. Today we were contacted by Utah Transportation Management to see if we had any coaches and drivers that could go help in evacuation of New Orleans. Finally a way to head to New Orleans and provide the assistance that we have wanted to do since a hurricane hit last Monday. Since this help will fall under FEMA we will be able to use four drivers and two motorcoaches to drive straight through to New Orleans. After finding three other drivers who were willing to help in this effort I head out to New Orleans. We pack extra supplies in the coaches along with water and food for ourselves. We also take along extra paper towels and toilet paper. About 9:00 p.m. we head south from Waterloo—

That is Waterloo, IA—

ready to go provide assistance to those in need.

Saturday, September 3: Driving straight through the night and switching off with driving we arrive at the staging area at Le Place, LA. The first thing we notice is the large number of motorcoaches waiting in the staging area and many more like ourselves, just pulling in. Our first order of business was to get in line to refill with fuel. We didn't stop for fuel on our way as we had been told that FEMA would provide fuel for all motorcoaches when we arrived at Le Place. We are ready to go to work and start moving people. The fuel was brought in by the National Guard and they did all the refueling in Le Place. Finally, it was our turn to get fuel. While fueling, we visited with the other drivers to find out what had been happening. We learned that after fueling you would get in another line and wait for orders. Nobody seemed to know who was in charge of the operation and there was very little communication. Finally a man with an orange vest came and asked us to get in line to go transport people. We lined up with 12 other coaches. Nobody moved until the state patrol was ready to provide escort. At last we have action. We are headed into New Orleans to do what we came down to do, move people. We had traveled about 10 miles when we were pulled onto the shoulder. No reason given for pulling all of us over. We sat and waited on the side of the highway wondering what was going to happen.

After a waiting about 45 minutes we started traveling again, and it was soon apparent

that we were headed back to the staging area. This whole operation seems to lack leadership and direction. We arrived back at the staging area at Le Place. Then we were sent down I-10 to the scale house and were staged with about 40 other coaches. Even the State patrol assigned to us didn't know what was going on. About 10 pm a deputy sheriff patrol showed up with some food for us. They didn't have any news or information. About 11 pm the State patrol said to stay with the motorcoach as we might be called upon at any time. As drivers we decided to get as much rest as we could while we had the opportunity.

So then presumably they slept the evening. That is a presumption on my part because it goes on now to Sunday, September 4. This is the fourth day of this tribulation.

Last night was a long night with little sleep as it is hard to sleep on the coach. About 4 am a group of school buses arrived from Houston, TX. They had been told to report to this staging area and wait. The morning passed by very slow and we never saw or heard from anybody that knew what was actually happening. This is really amazing as we are all here to work and provide help and we are just sitting along the interstate. At the scale house on the other side of the interstate a unit of federal border patrol agents is also waiting for instructions. They have been waiting since Tuesday for orders.

So that means that they had been waiting for 5 days, the Federal border patrol was waiting—that's my assumption—waiting for orders. My writer says:

I asked the state patrol to radio to the main staging area where we fueled to see what was going on. The patrol had as many questions as we did. It sure seems like mass confusion and no clear leader. I really wonder who is in charge of this operation. About noon a guy shows up in an orange vest and tells us that we are moving to a new staging area at Lake Charles, LA. Soon the rumor is going around through the drivers that we will be moving people out of temporary shelters to better places. We move to Lake Charles with high hopes that we will finally be moving people. At the edge of Lake Charles we are pulled onto the shoulder of the interstate. With over 60 motorcoaches sitting on the shoulder of a major interstate (I-10), this is an accident waiting to happen. The school buses from Houston are headed back to Houston as they were told there was no work for them. What a waste of resources to have them drive all the way from Houston to New Orleans only to turn around and head back. A highway patrol escort arrives and leads us to a large parking area at the Lake Charles airport. We are all parked in a row with no other instructions. When the last coach is parked a man who tells us he is the dispatcher for this operation arrives and tells us that we are going to regroup.

This man has made arrangements for us to have a hot meal supplied by the Lake Charles Firefighters in the armory at the airport. During this meal he informs us that rooms in a motel have been reserved for us for the night. As we sign up for our rooms we are told to report back tomorrow at 1:30 pm for more instructions. Since the rooms are in Beaumont, TX he arranges to have five motorcoaches to take us as a group. At least we will have a good bed to sleep in tonight and we will be able to take a shower.

Now, Monday September 5.

Continued conversation with other drivers reveals only rumors and no facts. About noon we head back to Lake Charles to report

in at this temporary dispatch office at the airport. When we report in, we are told there will be no movement until tomorrow. This is disappointing and hard to understand, especially as we listen to the radio and hear about this huge need to get people moved. Seems to me that there has to be a better way to organize and run this system. Who is in charge and who gives the orders to all of us (drivers)? There is very limited and very poor communication. If I ran operations like this, the company would lose all of its business and drivers. Calling back to the office—

I think he means his own office—

and to any other contact I can come up with doesn't provide any help. About 2 pm the dispatcher comes around looking for two coaches that have two drivers. We are just what he is looking for and we offer to be of service. He tells us to head to Fort Smith, AR as soon as we can hit the road and to report in at Fort Smith. We head right out and make the trip to Fort Smith. As we are going down the road we find out that a mistake has been made. Instead of Fort Smith at Fort Smith, AR, it is Fort Chaffee. The drive to Fort Smith is a long one, about 500 miles. Upon arrival we are to report to Fort Chaffee for instructions. As we are travelling we begin to notice many other motorcoaches headed the same direction.

September 6, Tuesday.

We arrive . . . and find the directions we were given in Lake Charles to be wrong. Finally, we arrive at Fort Chaffee and enter the base. The guards at the gate are very surprised to see us and they wonder why we are reporting at 2 a.m. The guards give us direction to the area where the people are housed. We get to that area only to find out nobody knows why they sent us to this base. Once again I get on the phone calling the numbers I was given. These calls just get voice mail and nobody ever returns the calls. One of the guards gives me the phone number of the base commander. I give him a call (at 2 a.m.) and have a nice conversation with him. I can see that he has no information to help us out. He suggests getting a motel room and coming back in the morning. There are no motel rooms available and it is now 4 a.m. We decide to head back into Fort Smith to top off the fuel tanks and get a hot breakfast. Looks like we are in a race headed nowhere. At 8 a.m. we report back to the base. We are wondering why we were sent over 500 miles to just sit and wait. The guards at the base are telling us that the people are being moved out to other places to live. Many of the other coaches from Lake Charles are showing up this morning. About 10 a.m. there is movement and they begin to load coaches to move people on. Some guy comes along and tells us to hang in there and we will soon be working. At noon we are moved into position to load people. However, we received no instructions or information as to where we will be going. Even the people we are loading don't know where they are headed. What a way to treat people who have lost everything they have. Soon we are loaded and waiting to go someplace. A representative of the state of AR comes aboard and wishes the people a good future. At the same time we are told we will be escorted by the state police to Siloam Springs, AR. We are part of a 12 coach move with a highway patrol escort for every three coaches. The drive is supposed to take about 90 minutes. The actual drive took us over three hours as the escort never went faster than 40 mph. All of the people are very thankful for the help in moving them and they are very pleasant considering what they have all been through.

Finally we arrive at Siloam Springs at a church camp. It seems like the whole com-

munity is here to welcome the people and help them make a home. It is very heart touching to see all the generous help. We unload and clean our two coaches. Feeling tired and hungry we head back towards Fort Smith. After what happened last night we see no need to arrive at Fort Chaffee in the middle of the night. We find rooms in Fayetteville and shut down for the night. The whole trip is nothing like we had hoped or thought it would be. Maybe we will feel better in the morning.

Morning is September 7, Wednesday. So this would be the seventh—it is my judgment this is the seventh day that my constituents were going through this trial and tribulation.

Our week of service is almost over and we sure haven't [done] much of any good. We have spent more time driving around empty as they have moved us all over. This morning we went back to Fort Chaffee and waited for new orders. Many other drivers were also waiting to see what we were to do. About noon we get the word that we were to report back to Lake Charles for the next duty. Here we go again on a 500 mile drive with no passengers. Does anybody really know what is going on? As we drive to Lake Charles, we know it will be about 9 p.m. when we arrive. Hopefully somebody will be around to fill us in. No such luck. When we arrive at Lake Charles the parking lot is filled with hundreds of motorcoaches. There are hundreds of coaches and drivers. Many drivers are very upset as they just sit idle. At Lake Charles we are told to report back in the morning and we are also told good luck on finding any lodging. Looks like another night of sleeping in the coach. I make some phone calls and find out there are some rooms at the casino. I call them and ask about rooms and explain what we have been doing. The manager gives us a deal on three rooms for the four of us. At least we will have a bed to sleep in and be able to take a shower in the morning.

September 8.

This will be Thursday.

This is the last day that we can help as we need to return to Iowa tonight. The coaches need to be back to go on charter trips. We will report to the temporary dispatch office early. With hundreds of coaches just parked it doesn't look good. The dispatcher said there is no work today and the next opportunity might be tomorrow. I ask if there is anybody that needs to move north as we could take people north as we head home. Nothing available today and with all the idle coaches it looks bad for tomorrow. I sign us out and we start back home. I am glad that we came down and tried to help. There is a huge sense of disappointment in the fact that we drove about 3,000 total miles and only hauled 47 people 103 miles. It seems like a huge waste of valuable resources and money. Especially as I look over a parking lot filled with hundreds of motorcoaches.

Somebody made the order to get all these coaches here and now they sit idle. It easy to see why people get frustrated with the system. Along with these coaches sitting idle, many school buses were moved to the area and never used. They were sent back home as they weren't needed. Today we learned that in the city of New Orleans all of the school buses were left to get caught in the flood. Why weren't they used before the hurricane and flood to get people moved out of harm's way in New Orleans. There are a large number of public officials at all levels and the news media pointing fingers trying to put the blame on FEMA when they should look at themselves. Why did the school buses get left and not used? Why didn't people heed the notice to get out and move to a safer area?

I think the whole process needs to be looked at and evaluated for making improvements. We were not the only ones to wonder what was going on. Almost all the drivers were asking who is in charge and where are the lines of communication. Of all the people who gave us orders, none of them seemed to understand operations and dispatch. From my viewpoint, it appears to me that many of those who were supposed to manage the coaches didn't have any idea of what to do and just how much help they needed.

September 9.

After driving through the night we arrived back in Iowa. We are tired and ready to be back in our own homes. The hardship we went through was very minor compared to what all the displaced families were going through. As a team, we all agreed that we would go again and we would do whatever we could to provide assistance to people in need. Hopefully, if there is a next time, there will be better organization and all involved parties will work together.

About 10 a.m. I received a call from the dispatcher in Lake Charles saying he had a trip for us. He was looking for us and wondered where we were. This is a good example of poor management as this was the same person I had signed out with yesterday morning in Lake Charles. What a joke and what a lack of management. I just hope that all of the drivers and coach companies didn't get mad at the system. If they did get upset with the whole system, there might not be enough help the next time.

I would go and help again. It seems like the call to come and help was about two days late. Then when the call went out, too many resources were brought into play and then there was overkill. I do hope to be able to sit down and talk with somebody who evaluates this operation.

Let me say parenthetically that he is going to continue to talk to other people, but he asked me to be part of this communication, to lay out, as he saw it, the problems, in hopes that action will be taken here and at the local responder level and the State level to make sure these things don't happen again.

I am going to say that sentence again that I just was distracted from.

I do hope to be able to sit down and talk with somebody who evaluates this operation.

Someway, somehow, there has to be a method to get operation managers in the right place to guide a mass movement of people as fast as possible. Maybe when this is all over people will have time to look back and make new plans.

The saddest part of this whole experience was the difference of the news media coverage to the real situation. The devastation was huge. The generous helping spirit of the American people was huge. A large number of resources available and there were people willing to provide assistance. Yet, many of these resources were poorly used as the lines of command and communication were poor. We went down to New Orleans to work hard and help. That goal of providing help was not accomplished in my eyes. Yes, we moved about 94 people on our two coaches. However, we only moved those people 100 miles and we spent the rest of our time driving empty as we were moved from place to place. There needs to be a better system of command and coordination.

I am very thankful for this opportunity to go and help, no matter how small the help seemed to be. The people we moved were very thankful and they greatly appreciated

the efforts of many. My heart hurts for those people who have lost everything but their lives. I also know that we had the right kind of intentions as we went to help.

I now turn to September 20. I just have 3 more days—no, 6 more days. Anyway, they went back to Iowa and then they were called upon again for an opportunity because of Hurricane Katrina. So September 20:

Once again the call has come for help in the gulf area of LA and TX as hurricane Rita moves into the area. We have the opportunity to provide service again to those in need. The people who have called us, have assured us that there are better plans and communications in place this time. They have told us that lessons were learned from Katrina. This evening we are headed out with two coaches and four drivers. This combination allows us to get to the area in a straight through drive and be ready to work. Our orders call for us to report to a rest stop on 1-49 north of Lafayette, LA. This will be our staging area. Before we leave, we put extra supplies on board, take some food and pack some bedding. We learned from the last time of helping that we might have to spend nights sleeping on the coach. We depart with high hopes and a thankful heart for this opportunity to provide help. The people who called for this help are aware that we can help until Sunday evening. The drivers and coaches need to be back in Iowa for other charter work next Monday.

September 21.

The drive down was interesting and we saw a lot of others headed south with the same purpose in mind. We did encounter a slight problem in southern MS. There is a bug that is called the "love bug" which is bad at this time of the year. We had to make a couple of extra stops to clean the windshields off. These bugs are nasty. Despite the delay we arrived at the staging area about 4:00 pm. The staging area was a rest stop on 1-49 which was closed down for public use. First order of business was to report in and fuel. After fueling, we reported in for duty. The first thing we were told was to get in line and wait for orders. This is sure looking like the Katrina help situation. The old hurry up and wait plan. Fortunately, we had stopped for a good hot meal in Lafayette and were good to go. As the night moved along it appeared that we were going to sit and do nothing.

September 22.

A short night of limited sleep in the seat of the coach. It is difficult to sleep on a coach. Good thing we brought food with us. We were able to save some snack bars for breakfast. About 7:00 am the dispatcher came looking for two coaches. We took the call and headed into Lafayette to help evacuate people from a hospital. At 9:00 am we were loaded with about 18 passengers on each coach. We waited on our orders and we waited and waited. About 1:00 pm a doctor connected with Homeland Security gave us the go ahead. We were part of an escorted convoy moving these people from Lafayette to Monroe, LA. A four hour drive under good conditions. Our passengers had been on the coach since 9:00 am and they were not given any food. A very long day for everybody with no food. All of these people had been moved out of New Orleans before Katrina and now they had to move again. This time they moved from a hospital to a gym on the campus of LA Tech in Monroe. Sure am glad we have an escort as the road is jammed with people moving north. There are no gripes on our part as we are doing the work we came down to do. After unloading the people and helping them

get moved into the gym, we took the opportunity to shower in the locker room. That was a refreshing moment. Then the drive back to the staging area. As we watched all the traffic moving north, we assumed we would be assigned a task as soon as we got back. That turned into a bad assumption. Upon our return to the staging area, we refueled and parked in line. Here we go again, another long night on the coach. Sleep didn't come easy and I went for a walk. As I was walking I noticed some empty parking places near the front of the line. I went back to the coaches and moved us up in the line with the thought that we might get an assignment quicker. We didn't come back down to park in a line and wait.

September 23, 2005.

Hurricane Rita is moving closer to shore. Why are we not moving people? The word among the drivers is that there was a coach accident in TX and things are on hold. This brings up the subject of safety. The majority of the coaches in use are top of the line, with excellent drivers and a great safety record. However, there are some coaches operating with lights out, broken air brakes and other safety related issues. These coaches should be pulled to the side and put out of service until they are repaired. There are more than enough coaches here that are in excellent condition to be used. Poor condition coaches should not be used. We are in a stressful situation, moving people whose lives are in danger. The coach accident in TX is a tragic deal. I don't know if it could have been avoided.

3:00 am, action at last. Ten coaches have been asked to move to the Baton Rouge airport to move people. We are part of the ten. Upon arrival at the airport we report in. Only, the airport was not expecting us and wonders why we were sent. This brings back bad thoughts of a couple of weeks ago. The airport folks find a place to park us while they determine the next step. We get parked right next to the National Guard base. The Guard asks all the drivers with the ten coaches in for a hot breakfast. This is very welcome and sure beats the snack foods. After breakfast we head back to the coach to nap and rest for whatever the next move might be. By noon the rain has started and Rita is nearing land.

Listening to the radio we hear about people who needed help to get out of the area. Why are we sitting here? At this point it is too late to go to the areas in need as we would arrive at the same time as the hurricane. We can only wonder why.

About 3:00 pm we get orders to move. We are moved to a large building in Baton Rouge and told to park along side the building. The rain is starting to come down hard. The coaches left at the rest stop on 1-49 are being moved further north to get out of harms way. Two FEMA representatives come out of the building and brief us. We are parked right along side the FEMA headquarters. We are at the main command post. Our orders are to stay prepared to move in case the building has to be evacuated. This is hard to believe. We have been assigned directly to the FEMA staff. During our discussion we ask if we can stay in the building tonight as we have been in the motorcoach since reporting for duty. The two staff members tell us they will check on that possibility. We never hear from them the rest of the night. The hurricane hits land near the LA-TX state line. It is no picnic in Baton Rouge. The wind is high and the rain comes down in sheets.

September 24.

With all the wind and the heavy rain it was difficult to get much sleep. It is very hard to believe and understand why we were not allowed to come in the building. It would have

been a lot safer inside and there was a floor that was devoted to sleeping quarters. They even had cots for people to use. Yesterday the two staff members had told us we could come in the building and use the showers. When we tried to do this, security would not let us near the building and security would not call the two staff members inside. This is crazy. We are good enough to sit outside during a hurricane to be on call to provide evacuation transportation. Yet, we are treated like criminals when we try to get in to use the showers. On the door there is a sign about a national news conference at 2 p.m. I tell the other three drivers with me that we will receive orders to move before 1:30 p.m.

Sure enough, at 1:30 p.m. we are given orders to move to the staging area at Le Place. The FEMA staff didn't want us parked near the building when the press conference was taking place.

We follow orders and head to Le Place to report in and top off the fuel tanks. There is water everywhere from all the rain. At Le Place we drive through water to report in. Once again the orders are to park and wait. We spend more time driving around empty and waiting for orders than we do working. Nothing is going to happen the rest of today. In the parking area there are city buses from Atlanta, GA. They were asked to come to the area to help move people. Thus far they have done nothing but sit and wait. We said welcome to the crowd.

Nightfall comes with no place to obtain lodging. However, there are a couple of restaurants open in the area and we can get a good meal. We spend our evening talking with other drivers and listening to all of the frustration just sitting around. This frustration builds larger each day as you see resources sitting idle.

September 25.

We are tired and weary from spending the past six nights trying to sleep in the coach. This morning we are able to take a shower at the truck stop. The \$9.00 to get a shower is worth every cent.

I sure wouldn't pay it.

After showers, we meet with the drivers of the other eight coaches we were with in Baton Rouge. As we are talking the dispatcher gives us orders to drive into New Orleans. We are going to be moving a National Guard unit out of New Orleans to the area where Rita has gone through.

After taking most of the morning it get organized the unit is ready to move out. We will be bringing up the rear of the convoy. Our route will be I-10 to Lafayette where the unit has been reassigned. I have discovered that these orders were issued at 1 a.m. this morning and it took eight hours for them to move through channels to us and the military. What an amazing chain of command. The commander of the unit fills us in on the route and how to drive in a convoy. The members of the unit are very happy to ride in the air conditioned coach. Upon arrival in Lafayette they set up a command center at an old Service Master store. We have to wait until the command releases us before we can go back to Le Place. The afternoon goes by slowly as we wait to be released from duty. The commander holds us as he sees no reason to be stationed in Lafayette as they have very little damage. Once again, I want to ask who is in charge. About 9 p.m. we are released to go back to Le Place.

Arriving in Le Place we find hundreds of coaches parked and waiting for orders. This brings back all the thoughts about wasteful use of resources. Our time is up; we need to head back to Iowa. I make the arrangements to be released and we head out for home.

September 26

Another long night of driving and we finally get home, a very tired group. This has proved to be another growing experience. Sleeping every night in the motorcoach, only getting one good meal a day, and only having two showers all week. We all learned a lot about ourselves and what we are able to do when needed.

The hardest thing to accept this trip was sitting out the hurricane in the motorcoach. It is very difficult to understand and accept the fact that we were not allowed in the FEMA building during the hurricane. Good enough to be a safety valve, but not good enough to be allowed in the building.

Hopefully, at some point in the future I will have an opportunity to share with the right folks and work with them to improve the system and the way it works as it relates to motorcoaches. Especially in the area of equipment safety and using motorcoaches to move large numbers of people in an emergency.

That is the end of his diary. He ends with a little paragraph that says:

Thoughts of Craig Van Waardhuizen while working through the Katrina and Rita hurricanes in LA. I was lead member of a four member team providing motorcoach service with two motorcoaches. I am a Terminal Manager and Operations Director for Northwest Iowa Transportation, Inc (a motorcoach carrier in Iowa with membership in UMA, ABA and IMG).

Craig Van Waardhuizen.

I thank my friend Craig for sharing his experiences with the people of the Nation through this, but most importantly for the Senate and my Senate colleagues to take this into consideration.

#### PRAIRIE LAKES RESPONDS TO HURRICANE KATRINA

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I have one additional statement in regard to the Katrina situation.

As I said earlier before I read Craig's diary, I am a member of the Prairie Lakes Baptist Church at Cedar Falls, IA. Immediately after Katrina, our church in the following 3 weeks sent three different delegations—in other words, three different teams; a team the first week, a different team the second week, and a different team the third week—to go down to Brookhaven, MS, and help the First Baptist Church in Ocean Springs, MS, in their efforts to feed people who were in need and house people who were in need and do other things.

I have this letter which was sent to the pastor of our church, Pastor John Fuller, from the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Oceans Springs, MS. It says:

Dear Pastor:  
I have never had the privilege of meeting you—but I know you because I have experienced the heart of your people. Mark Sherwood, Mike and Denise Goyen, Dalen Grimm, indeed the entire crew from Prairie Lakes Church manifested the heart of Mary, the hands of Martha, the hope of Jesus.

My wife and I count our Iowa volunteers as among the best of the best. They worked hard, they were sensitive to the people's broken hearts, and they were a blessing to our church, especially to my family and me.

It is my desire to come to Iowa, to thank you and your people for the job well done.

Mike Barnett.

I ask unanimous consent to have that statement printed in the RECORD, along with the list of the people from my church who were in teams 1, 2 and 3, as well as an article from the Waterloo Courier which talks about this.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

#### PRAIRIE LAKES RESPONDS TO HURRICANE KATRINA

DEAR PASTOR: I have never had the privilege of meeting you—but I know you because I have experienced the heart of your people. Mark Sherwood, Mike and Denise Goyen, Dalen Grimm, indeed the entire crew from Prairie Lakes Church manifested the heart of Mary, the hands of Martha and the hope of Jesus.

My wife and I count our Iowa volunteers as among the best of the best. They worked hard, they were sensitive to people's broken hearts, and they were a blessing to our church, especially to my family and me.

It is my desire to come to Iowa, to thank you and your people for a job well done.

Sincerely,

MIKE BARNETT,  
Pastor of First Baptist Church,  
Ocean Springs, MS.

#### TEAM 1

Mark Badura; Jared Coffin; Steve Coffin; Kellie Dean; Michelle Ford; Adam Graber; Crystal Halverson; Mary Jungling; Nancy Killian; Georgianne Meester; Paul Neal; William Pierce; Mark Sherwood; Jerry Steele; Sara Steele; Andrew Zaug; Randy Zey; and Rob Zey.

#### TEAM 2

Mackenzie Carlisle; Bret Ford; Ally Fuller; Denise Goyen; Mike Goyen; Pat Haley; Ramon Harp; Holly Hartley; Bethany Pals; Mary Pals; Laney Poyner; Mark Sherwood; Julie Starbeck; Katie Trautmann; Lynn Trautmann; Beth Wion; and Rick Wion.

#### TEAM 3

Barb Braun; Erica Braun; Mike Campbell; Lori Edgerton; Steve Ephraim; Kelly Erickson; Lyndsey Fabel; Denise Goyen; Mike Goyen; Dalen Grimm; Kimberly Hansen; Jean Johnson; Gayle Kucera; Bailey Leymaster; Jessica Lippold; Aaron Merken; Rebekah Morris; Jeff Norton; Lauren Page; Joel Palmer; Jessie Paulson; Jeremy Sherwood; Mark Sherwood; Dean Smock; Judy Smock; Jenna Wheatly; and Ellie Zieser.

#### MISSION OF MERCY

#### CEDAR FALLS CHURCH MEMBERS HELP EVACUEES IN MISSISSIPPI

(By Karen Heinselman)

BROOKHAVEN, MS.—Homeseekers paradise.

That's how Lincoln County residents partial to Brookhaven introduce the southwest Mississippi town to strangers. "It might not look like it, but people like living here," boasted Clifford Britt, manager of the Brookhaven Lincoln County Airport

A 17-person crew from Prairie Lakes Church in Cedar Falls in town to help with hurricane relief hasn't had time to assess Brookhaven's best features. They drove in late Tuesday. They do have a deeper understanding of the disaster they are facing as they share meals and conversation with survivors of Hurricane Katrina.

"All I've talked to have lost everything," said Nancy Killian, 58, of Cedar Falls. "We mingle with them, give hugs when we can."

Located 100 miles north of New Orleans, Brookhaven has been an outpost for some 1,600 people displaced by the hurricane, said Mayor Bob Massingill. Many evacuees have