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House of Representatives

The House was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, September 2, 2005, at 1 p.m.

Senate

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2005

The Senate met at 10:02 p.m., pursuant to section 2 of H. Con. Res. 225 of the 109th Congress, and was called to order by the Honorable THAD COCHRAN, a Senator from the State of Mississippi.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to the authority granted by section 2 of H. Con. Res. 225 of the 109th Congress, the Speaker of the House and the majority leader of the Senate, acting jointly and in consultation with the minority leaders of the House and Senate respectively, have determined that the public interest warrants a convening of the Senate at this time, notwithstanding the order of July 29, 2005.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Lord God, Creator of land, sea, and sky, we come humbly into Your presence awed by nature's power and saddened by the tragic losses caused by Hurricane Katrina. We enter Your throne room more aware of the fragility of life and more cognizant of the many unanswered questions that reverberate in our hearts. We need You now more than ever.

Lord, let Your presence be felt in our land. As multitudes seek to rebuild their lives, give them wisdom and courage. Bring healing to the sick and provisions to the destitute. Comfort those who mourn, and guide our leaders as they seek to grapple with the challenges of today and tomorrow.

We pray in Your sovereign Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable THAD COCHRAN led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, September 1, 2005.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable THAD COCHRAN, a Senator from the State of Mississippi, to perform the duties of the Chair.

TED STEVENS,
President pro tempore.

Mr. COCHRAN thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

LETTER OF NOTIFICATION

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a letter of no-

tification relating to section 2 of H. Con. Res. 225 be printed in the RECORD.

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

SEPTEMBER 1, 2005.

DEAR COLLEAGUE: Pursuant to section 2 of House Concurrent Resolution 225, after consultation with the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives and the Minority Leader of the Senate, we hereby notify the Members of the Senate to reassemble at 10:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 1, 2005, and the Members of the House of Representatives to reassemble at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, September 2, 2005.

Sincerely,

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House.
WILLIAM H. FRIST, M.D.,
Majority Leader of the Senate.

HURRICANE KATRINA

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, on behalf of my colleagues and fellow Americans, I come to the Senate floor to extend my heartfelt sympathies to the victims of Hurricane Katrina and to reassure the thousands of families suffering from this tragedy that we are committed to providing all of the relief and support necessary to get through this terrible and ongoing crisis. It is unprecedented, and it is unfolding before our eyes. Thus, this is a highly unusual emergency session we are conducting tonight.

As the President has said, our first priority is saving lives. At this very moment, relief organizations and faith-based volunteers are working valiantly to provide food, shelter, water, and

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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medical care. FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, has delivered essential sustenance and supplies. It has supplied and continues to supply generators and thousands of cots and blankets and has deployed over 1,800 personnel to save lives and render medical assistance.

Our action, coupled with the House action tomorrow, will ensure that all necessary funds are immediately available to respond to this ongoing crisis.

The Army, Navy, National Guard, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Air National Guard are hard at work conducting rescue operations and providing aid. Twenty thousand guardsmen are on the ground right now. Thousands more are on the way.

Volunteers from my home State of Tennessee have been on the front lines all week. I think of Tennessee Baptist Disaster Relief, a ministry of 3,000 Southern Baptist Tennessee churches. They are working around the clock on rescue missions, at relief stations, cooking thousands of meals and providing emergency care. And they are offering something else, something desperately needed in this time of tragedy: the hope and the love and the compassion of a Nation—of all of us pulling together as one.

As Norma Jones, a 63-year-old volunteer from Indian Mound, told a newspaper, "Most of the time, the rescue survivors just want to be hugged."

Hundreds of storm victims have found refuge in Nashville and middle Tennessee. Many are staying with relatives until it is safe to return, which, as we all know, may not be for months.

The ongoing crisis has become a crisis of refugees, a crisis of refugees the likes of which this country has never seen. In Memphis, TN, actually a long way from the gulf, there are 10,000 refugees as we speak, and over the course of tonight they are expecting 4,000 more refugees in that town alone.

On the television, we see families wading waste-high for dozens of blocks in search of food or dry land or clean water. We see those families marooned on those rooftops, as floodwaters swirl past, writing, inscribing with whatever they have available: "Need insulin." "Diabetic." "Please help"—reaching out for hope, reaching out to be saved.

Our very own colleague and friend, Senator TRENT LOTT of Mississippi, lost his family home in this disaster. He returned recently—about 2 days ago—to his family home and found nothing. Our deepest sympathies go out to him and his family as they face this difficult time and to so many others in this body and, indeed, all around this country who face these personal challenges.

Towns, cities, communities, and shorelines have been decimated and reduced to rubble, to debris. We have a public health crisis that is just beginning, an ongoing crisis, but one that will increase almost with certainty over the coming days and weeks.

New Orleans, one of America's most vibrant cities, will take years to re-

cover. Hundreds of helpless people remain trapped on highway overpasses and in the city center with nowhere to go, no food, no water, no sanitation, and security has been tough, as we have all seen over the course of the day.

Most of Mississippi is without power, without electricity. Towns, villages have been totally destroyed.

The darkness of the night will be not just dramatic but, as we heard over the last several hours, haunting underneath those bridges, in rural areas with no lights for blocks, for miles, just human suffering.

Our rescue teams are working hard, and we see that. We are so proud of them, and they deserve our praise—our enormous praise—for their courage, for their boldness, for their dedication. People are still stranded. They are reaching their breaking point, and they need our help now. That is why at 10 o'clock tonight we are acting. That is why we are convening tonight in this urgent session for an emergency supplemental, operating by unanimous consent. FEMA needs additional funds now to continue their relief efforts and to continue the recovery.

Over the course of the last several days, we have had numerous calls with President Bush, and the Democratic leader and I just several hours ago received a call from President Bush requesting these funds. We applaud President Bush. He moved early to get emergency supplies prepared and ready to go. We have been in constant contact. He and his administration have been working tirelessly to meet this daunting challenge.

We all recognize we have much to do. There are a lot of frustrations that have bubbled up over the course of the last several days to do more or things are not going well, and we feel those frustrations. We feel that pain. We feel that suffering. Again, that is why we are here tonight—to support, to deliver, to answer those challenges.

I also thank our State and local leaders for their tremendous dedication and commitment. We, this body, our Federal Government, stand behind them 100 percent. Helping the victims of this hurricane disaster is our highest priority.

Hurricane Katrina and her aftermath is, as we now know, one of the worst catastrophes this country has ever seen. But this is America, and in America we face our toughest challenges together as one, united and lifted up by our compassion and our strength.

Even in our darkest hour, our humanity shines through, millions of citizens, millions of Americans committed to one another, to the care and well-being of all.

Inscribed in this very Chamber just above the Presiding Officer is "E Pluribus Unum," out of many, one.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

HURRICANE KATRINA RELIEF

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I begin by offering my thoughts and my prayers to the victims of Hurricane Katrina. They have experienced untold horrors in the past few days, and the road to recovery will be long and hard. As we approach the start of our regular fall work period, there can be no more important challenge facing this body in the days ahead than providing relief to the victims of this catastrophe. It will be weeks before we know the full toll this storm has exacted. The only thing we know for sure is that we have experienced a national crisis, and the people of the Gulf Coast need and deserve our help.

In these crucial hours, thousands of Americans are engaged in search and rescue efforts. I hope these brave men and women performing these heroic duties know that they, too, are in our thoughts and our prayers.

Tonight, in the Senate, we are taking a critical first step toward bringing relief to the victims of this disaster. I support President Bush for submitting this \$10.5 billion request, and I thank my colleagues for permitting us to take up and pass this important legislation tonight.

Our unified response sends a powerful signal to victims of this tragedy, looking for signs that their Government sees their plight and stands with them during this dark time.

In these days ahead, it is important we continue to send a strong unified message. We must work together—not together as Democrats and Republicans but as Americans—united in helping families torn apart by this devastating storm.

It is my hope that our actions following the 9/11 attacks will be a model for what we do tonight and in the future. Our action after 9/11 was bipartisan. It was our top priority, and it moved significant resources to the victims of the terrorist attacks, and in a timely manner.

Our response to the tragedy of September 2005 must be every bit as bipartisan and direct as the tragedy of September 2001. We did not handle 9/11 with a Democratic or Republican aid package, and we should not handle this crisis any differently. This is not the time for partisanship. The victims of this terrible tragedy come first.

With that principle guiding us, it is important we begin to consider our next steps. The \$10.5 billion we are sending now represents a good first effort, but we all know much more needs to be done. I am deeply concerned about the security situation on the ground as I speak. Unless we establish security in this area, we cannot mount