

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE

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<http://www.house.gov/science/welcome.htm>

September 14, 2005

The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I write because of my committee's jurisdictional responsibilities over the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and more specifically over the National Weather Service (NWS) and its National Hurricane Center (NHC).

According to press reports, Max Mayfield, director of the National Hurricane Center, personally briefed you on Sunday, August 28 about the impending landfall of Hurricane Katrina and its potential effects.

The oversight responsibilities of the Science Committee make it imperative that the committee fully understand the depth and substance of the communications between the NHC and your Administration. That understanding necessarily includes the details of your conversation with the NHC Director and any other conversations between senior White House staff and members of NOAA, including the NWS and its NHC.

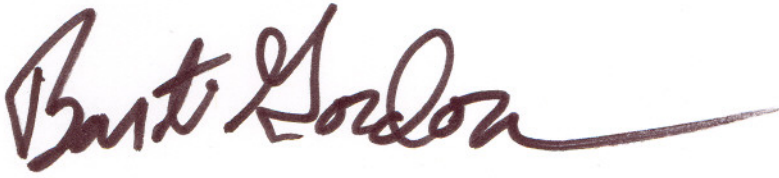
We request the following:

- 1) The full transcript of your Sunday, August 28, 2005 videoconference with NHC director Max Mayfield, including names and affiliations of all the parties who were involved either by physically attending the videoconference with you in Crawford or by other electronic means.
- 2) A list of all persons in the White House who were contacted by Max Mayfield, Brigadier General David Johnson (ret.), or Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr. between August 23 and August 31, 2005 regarding Hurricane Katrina.
- 3) Where transcripts exist, transcripts of all conversations that took place between NOAA, NWS or NHC personnel and White House Advisors or staff.

Given the importance and magnitude of this tragedy, we trust that you will provide a prompt and full accounting concerning this chain of communication. As you may be

aware, on Wednesday, September 21, 2005, the full Science Committee will be holding a hearing on NOAA's hurricane forecasting. As such, we ask that you respond by the c.o.b. Tuesday, September 20, 2005.

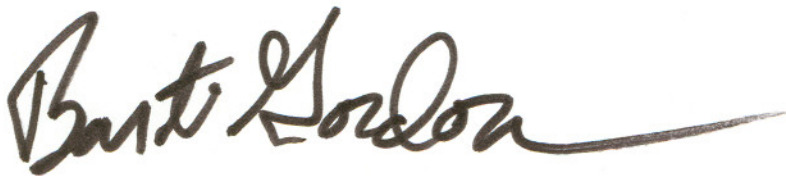
If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact my staff at (202) 225-4494.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Bart Gordon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sincerely,
Bart Gordon
Ranking Member
House of Representative
Committee on Science

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