

**Opening Statement of  
Senator Ted Stevens  
GAO's Analysis of the Gulf Coast Recovery  
Disaster Recovery Subcommittee  
April 12, 2007**

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- I am pleased to be here with my colleague senator Landrieu for the inaugural hearing of the Subcommittee on Disaster Recovery discussing the Gulf Coast recovery efforts.
- I wanted to take this opportunity to thank the GAO for giving us a preview of their report, which I understand will be available by June. I am sure all of us here today will be interested in your findings.
- I also wanted to thank the federal coordinator and all of the local and state officials here today for taking the time to come here to assist us in understanding the current situation in the Gulf Coast region.
- I, and my fellow Alaskans, understand your plight. The most powerful earthquake ever measured in North America, the Good Friday earthquake, had its epicenter in Prince William Sound less than 75 miles from Anchorage causing extensive regional damage. Our State must face the full gambit of natural disasters from earthquakes to tsunamis to forest fires to volcanoes. We understand your situation and want to help.
- When regional disasters such as these occur the federal government must step in to provide assistance and expertise. Effective and efficient rebuilding cannot occur, however, without a partnership among the federal, state and local governments.
- I am eager to hear how this partnership is progressing, both to better address the situation in the Gulf Coast region and to better prepare ourselves for future events.