

Opening Statement of

**Senator Susan M. Collins
Ranking Member, Homeland Security and
Governmental Affairs Committee**

**Nomination Hearing of
Dennis R. Schrader
to be
Deputy Administrator for National Preparedness
Federal Emergency Management Agency**

**July 25, 2007
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**Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome, Mr.
Schrader.**

**The FEMA Reform Act written by this
Committee [and signed into law last year] reunited
the preparedness and response functions of a
strengthened Federal Emergency Management
Agency within the Department of Homeland**

Security. The Deputy Administrator for National Preparedness, a new position created by that law, will play a key role in meeting that challenge.

The need for this reunification, this strengthening, and this position was made clear by our investigation into the flawed preparation for and response to Hurricane Katrina.

The responsibilities of this new position are extensive: policy development, contingency planning, exercise coordination and evaluation, emergency management training and hazard mitigation, to name but a few. Beyond the specifics of a job description, the Deputy Administrator for National Preparedness must be a builder – a builder of a new FEMA as an integral part of DHS, a builder

of a new culture of all-hazard preparedness across all levels of government, and, above all, a builder of a restored faith within the American people in government's ability to meet its fundamental obligation of protecting our citizens.

Mr. Schrader brings significant experience and expertise to this great challenge. As Director of Maryland's Office of Homeland Security, he worked to develop a regional vision for homeland security preparedness, response, and recovery; to implement accountable and measurable program oversight for all federal homeland security dollars coming to his state; and to establish the Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center. His service on the U.S. Attorney's Office Anti-Terrorism Advisory Council of Maryland and as the Chairman of the Public Safety

Communications Interoperability Governance Work Group bears directly upon two issues that have long been at the top of this Committee's agenda.

No aspect of our post-Katrina legislation stirred more debate and more disagreement than our proposal to keep a strengthened FEMA as part of DHS. Our proposal prevailed in the end because it is clear that the challenges of the 21st Century require a single agency to plan, coordinate, and integrate homeland security and disaster operations. DHS is that agency and FEMA is its core.

But passing legislation is only one hurdle. The real challenge comes in implementation, in creating a vigorous, coordinated, and accountable national emergency management network. I commend Mr.

**Schrader for his willingness to accept that challenge,
and I look forward to our discussion today.**