

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 1, 2005

Andrew H. Card, Jr.
Chief of Staff
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Card:

On September 30, 2005, we wrote to you requesting documents from the White House relating to Hurricane Katrina. We asked that in responding to the request, you give priority to providing communications involving officials in the offices of the President, the Vice President, the Homeland Security Advisor, and yourself. We asked for your initial response within two weeks.

Today, our staffs met with representatives from the White House Counsel's office to discuss the White House response to our request. White House officials informed us that providing the documents identified in the September 30 letter would take more than a year and involve reviewing more than 71 million email messages sent or received by White House staff. We were also informed that providing the priority communications imposed a lesser, but still very substantial, burden and raised other concerns as well.

Although we disagree with your interpretation regarding the burden of responding to our priority request, we are writing to further specify the timeframe, the individuals, and the topics covered by that request. Specifically, we request that you produce all documents or communications, including internal communications, relating to certain subjects, received, sent, or reviewed between August 23, 2005, and September 15, 2005, by Chief of Staff Andrew Card, Deputy Chief of Staff Joe Hagin, Homeland Security Adviser Frances Townsend and her deputy, Ken Rapuano, and two senior staff in each of their immediate offices who were involved with the Administration's efforts relating to Hurricane Katrina during that time period.

We ask that these documents and communications refer or relate to the preparations for, impacts of, or response to Hurricane Katrina, including the Administration's efforts to provide food, water, and shelter to victims of Hurricane Katrina, to provide public safety and law enforcement resources to the areas affected by Hurricane Katrina, to provide relief, including evacuation, to victims at the Superdome, the Convention Center, and the area known as the cloverleaf, to mobilize active duty and reserve forces to support relief efforts, and to provide medical assistance in the affected areas.

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As you know, the Select Committee has a very short deadline for completing its work, and we would like to avoid the issuance of subpoenas. We therefore ask that you produce these priority documents by the close of business on Tuesday, December 6, which is over two months after our initial request was sent.

After the production of these priority documents, we would like to have further discussions with you or your representative about how to prioritize a complete response to our September 30 request.

Sincerely,



Tom Davis
Chairman
Select Bipartisan Committee to
Investigate the Preparation for
and Response to Hurricane Katrina



Charles Melancon
Member of Congress