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Folder Title:

673801

**THE WHITE HOUSE
DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT AND TRACKING
WORKSHEET**



DATE RECEIVED: 9/21/2005

CASE ID: 673801

NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: THE HONORABLE BARACK OBAMA

SUBJECT: REQUESTS THAT THE PRESIDENT DIRECT DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, FEMA AND HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AND OTHER RELEVANT AGENCIES TO WORK WITH THE RED CROSS AND HOSPITALS IN AFFECTED AREAS TO ELIMINATE ANY BUREAUCRATIC OBSTACLES PREVENTING MUCH-NEEDED SERVICES FROM GETTING TO HURRICANE VICTIMS

ROUTE TO: AGENCY/OFFICE	(STAFF NAME)	ACTION		DISPOSITION		
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LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS	CANDI WOLFF	ORG	9/21/2005			
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MEDIA: LETTER

USER CODE:

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ACTION CODES:	DISPOSITION						
A - APPROPRIATE ACTION B - RESEARCH AND REPORT BACK D - DRAFT RESPONSE I - INFO COPY/NO ACT NECESSARY R - DIRECT REPLY W/ COPY	<table border="1"> <tr> <th>TYPE RESPONSE:</th> <th>DISPOSITION CODES:</th> <th>COMPLETED DATE:</th> </tr> <tr> <td> TYPE RESPONSE = INITIALS OF SIGNER NRN = NO RESPONSE NEEDED </td> <td> A - ANSWERED/ACKNOWLEDGED C - CLOSED X - INTERIM REPLY </td> <td> COMPLETED = DATE OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OR CLOSE-OUT DATE (MM/DD/YY) </td> </tr> </table>	TYPE RESPONSE:	DISPOSITION CODES:	COMPLETED DATE:	TYPE RESPONSE = INITIALS OF SIGNER NRN = NO RESPONSE NEEDED	A - ANSWERED/ACKNOWLEDGED C - CLOSED X - INTERIM REPLY	COMPLETED = DATE OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OR CLOSE-OUT DATE (MM/DD/YY)
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REFER QUESTIONS AND ROUTING UPDATES TO DOCUMENT TRACKING UNIT (ROOM 84, OE0B) EXT-62590 KEEP THIS WORKSHEET ATTACHED TO THE ORIGINAL INCOMING LETTER AT ALL TIMES AND SEND COMPLETED RECORD TO OFFICE OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

673801

September 8, 2005

The Honorable George W. Bush
President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush:

I am writing to ask you to take all necessary steps to expedite the process by which volunteer medical personnel can be deployed to areas damaged by Hurricane Katrina and areas where evacuees have been relocated.

When I was in Houston earlier this week with former Presidents Bush and Clinton, I met countless hurricane evacuees with heart-wrenching stories about the lack of medical care at the Superdome and New Orleans Convention Center. Although these people all expressed relief at the dramatically improved conditions at the Reliant Center, many were worried about the sick and elderly left behind at the makeshift hospital inside of the New Orleans airport. Many were also concerned about whether they would be able to receive adequate medical care while staying at temporary shelters in Houston.

I understand that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has issued an urgent request for medical volunteers, including paramedics and mental health workers to respond to the needs of the sick, and morticians to respond to the recovery of those lives already lost in this disaster. And, an update published by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on Tuesday stated that Louisiana requires 100 mental health professionals for screening, counseling, and tracking of post-traumatic stress disorders.

The federal government should be doing everything possible to streamline the process by which trained medical personnel around the country can volunteer their services in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and any of the states where evacuees have been relocated. Indeed, I have heard from many medical personnel in Illinois who were eager to travel to these states to provide assistance.

Unfortunately, my office has received numerous complaints from volunteer doctors that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) did not return their phone calls, did not have information on how they could volunteer, or simply referred them to local authorities who were not able to help them. Doctors who attempted to volunteer their services on the HHS website encountered significant difficulties as well. Such a lack of information and responsiveness is shocking during a time of emergency.

The Honorable George W. Bush
September 8, 2005
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Given the urgent need to get medical personnel to affected areas as soon as possible, I am writing to request that you direct DHS, FEMA, HHS, and all other relevant agencies to work with the Red Cross and hospitals in affected areas to eliminate any bureaucratic obstacles preventing much-needed services from getting to hurricane victims. This includes providing more detailed information to the medical profession about how they can volunteer their services, better coordination of volunteer doctors and nurses with the Red Cross and local hospitals, and waivers of liability for volunteer medical professionals.

The health of too many people remains at risk, and bureaucratic red tape and run-arounds should not prevent these people from getting the help they need.

Sincerely,

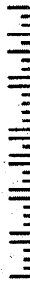
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barack Obama", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Barack Obama
United States Senator

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1306

OFFICIAL BUSINESS



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U.S.S.

SEP 21 2005

The Honorable George W. Bush
President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

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