

a nationwide fundraising effort to help the victims of Hurricane Katrina.

In the days ahead, the former Presidents will ask Americans to open their hearts and their wallets to help those in need. And they're going to talk to large corporations and small businesses and individual citizens across the Nation. The contributions will benefit the relief organizations that are doing vital work on the ground. We're going to take a look and make sure that the money raised is money needed. Right now if our fellow citizens want to help, they ought to give a cash donation to the Red Cross, which they can find at phone number 1-800-HELP-NOW.

I was so proud of the efforts that President Clinton and President Bush did to help the victims of the tsunami relief. Our country marveled at their capacity to rally our citizens and to work together. And once again, I've asked them to work to help the needs of those who hurt. And once again, I'm confident that the American people will respond.

I know this is an agonizing time, or we all know this is an agonizing time for the people of the Gulf Coast. I ask their continued patience as recovery operations unfold. I can assure them that the thoughts and prayers of the entire Nation are with them and their loved ones. I'm also confident that when it's all said and done, the efforts to rebuild the great city of New Orleans and to rebuild those communities in Mississippi and to help the folks in Alabama will make this Nation a stronger place.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, Chief, National Guard Bureau.

Memorandum on Assistance to Federal Employees Affected by Hurricane Katrina

September 1, 2005

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Assistance to Federal Employees Affected by Hurricane Katrina

I have directed the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to establish an emergency leave transfer program to assist employees affected by Hurricane Katrina. The emergency leave transfer program will permit employees in an executive agency to donate unused annual leave for transfer to employees of the same or other agencies who have been adversely affected by Hurricane Katrina and who need additional time off from work without having to use their own paid leave.

George W. Bush

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives Transmitting a Supplemental Appropriation for Response and Recovery Efforts in Areas Struck by Hurricane Katrina

September 1, 2005

Dear Mr. Speaker:

As I informed the Nation yesterday, we are dealing with one of the worst natural disasters in our country's history. Residents of the Gulf Coast States affected by the hurricane have lost loved ones, have lost homes, and have been displaced from their communities. My Administration is committed to ensuring that they will have the full support of the Federal Government.

Due to the catastrophic nature of Hurricane Katrina, I am asking the Congress to consider expeditiously the enclosed request, totaling \$10.5 billion, for an emergency FY 2005 supplemental appropriation for the Departments of Homeland Security and Defense. These funds will ensure that Federal response and recovery efforts continue uninterrupted.

I hereby designate this proposal in the amount requested herein as an emergency