

the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp;

Whereas democratic Israel is annually the object of nearly two dozen redundantly critical resolutions in the United Nations General Assembly, which rarely adopts resolutions relating to specific countries; and

Whereas the viciousness with which Israel is attacked and discriminated against at the United Nations should not be allowed to continue unchallenged: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved, That—*

(1) the Senate—

(A) welcomes recent attempts by the United Nations Secretary General to address the issue of anti-Semitism;

(B) calls on the leadership of the United Nations to officially and publicly condemn anti-Semitic statements made at all United Nations meetings and hold accountable United Nations member states that make such statements; and

(C) strongly urges the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to develop and implement education awareness programs about the Holocaust throughout the world as part of an effort to combat the rise in anti-Semitism and racial, religious, and ethnic intolerance; and

(2) it is the sense of the Senate that—

(A) the President should direct the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to continue working toward further reduction of anti-Semitic language and anti-Israel resolutions;

(B) the President should direct the Secretary of State to report on acts of anti-Semitism at the United Nations and United Nations agencies by member states; and

(C) projects funded through the Middle East Partnership Initiative and United States overseas broadcasts should include efforts to educate Arab and Muslim countries about anti-Semitism, religious intolerance, and incitement to violence.

#### LEUKEMIA, LYMPHOMA AND MYELOMA AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. FRIST. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 241, which was introduced earlier today by Senator JEFFORDS.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 241) designating September 2005 as Leukemia, Lymphoma and Myeloma Awareness Month.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I am here today to ask for my colleagues' support for a resolution designating September as Leukemia, Lymphoma and Myeloma Awareness Month. Today, I want to speak specifically about leukemia, a disease that affects nearly 200,000 Americans.

Leukemia is a devastating cancer of the blood that will kill almost 23,000 people this year alone. It is rare to find anyone today who does not know someone, a family member or a friend, who has battled leukemia. Recently, one of my former staff members, Jess Eiesland, was diagnosed with leukemia. He is only 28. He left my office in May of this year to follow in his father's footsteps and pursue a career in fi-

nance. On June 18th, Jess was diagnosed with Acute Myelogenous Leukemia, a form of the disease characterized by the uncontrolled production of immature white blood cells by the bone marrow. Jess is now back in South Dakota with his family and traveling to Minnesota to undergo an 11-week course of chemotherapy in preparation for a bone marrow transplant.

In comparison, Jess is one of the lucky ones. His leukemia was caught early and he has just learned that his sister, Laura, is a bone marrow match. This match will reduce Jess' risk of developing severe side effects from the transplant or rejecting the new cells. Only 30 percent of patients in need of a bone marrow transplant have a matching donor in their families. Others have to depend on the kindness of strangers who have registered their bone marrow types with the National Bone Marrow Registry and volunteered as donors. In honor of Jess, a bone marrow registration drive is being held in Room 124 of the Senate Hart building on Friday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Because of the risk of rejection associated with bone marrow transplants and the difficulty in finding donors, the National Institutes of Health and the private sector have developed other promising leukemia treatments, such as cord blood transplants and the pharmaceutical drug, Gleevec, the first of a slew of promising new drugs that target the underlying causes of the disease. To promote these innovative treatments, we must continue to support biomedical research. I applaud the efforts of our distinguished colleagues, Senators HATCH and DODD, who introduced legislation earlier this year that would encourage cord blood donations and registrations. This legislation has already been reported favorably by the HELP Committee and I hope the full Senate can take it up and pass it soon. Additionally, the Senate has requested a \$1 billion dollar funding increase for the NIH in fiscal year 2006 to promote Federal research and innovation.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution designating September as National Leukemia, Lymphoma and Myeloma Awareness Month. Doing so will further disseminate information regarding treatment innovations and will encourage Americans to become bone marrow or cord blood donors.

#### RECOGNIZING SEPTEMBER 2005 AS LEUKEMIA AND LYMPHOMA AWARENESS MONTH

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I wish to express my support for designating September as Leukemia and Lymphoma Awareness Month. It is estimated that leukemia, lymphoma, and myeloma will kill 60,500 people in the United States this year and that 110,000 new cases are diagnosed each year. With more than 700,000 Americans living with blood cancers, it is crucial that we come together to reinvigorate our resolve and continuously intensify our fight for a cure.

I am pleased to join the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society in encouraging all to put aside time to reflect on what has been achieved so far in fighting blood cancers, spread lifesaving knowledge, and set our sights on progressive goals to advance our ability to support and treat those living with leukemia and lymphoma. Together, we can push forward critical research and keep the eradication of these diseases at the forefront of dialogue and education in our local and national communities.

I applaud the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society for its support of treatment and research. Such work is integral to our ability to understand these illnesses and energize our fellow citizens in this very worthy endeavor. The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society has provided an outstanding model of advocacy and paved the way for others to get involved.

I am pleased to invite my colleagues to join me in acknowledging Leukemia and Lymphoma Awareness Month. I hope that you will use this time as inspiration for continued thoughtful leadership on this critical health issue.

Mr. FRIST. I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate, and that any statements relating to this measure be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 241) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 241

Whereas blood-related cancers currently afflict more than 747,000 Americans, with an estimated 114,000 new cases diagnosed each year;

Whereas leukemia, lymphoma, and myeloma will kill an estimated 54,480 people in the United States this year;

Whereas the National Cancer Institute of the National Institute of Health is committed to the elimination of suffering and death due to cancer by the year 2015;

Whereas the Senate is similarly committed to the eradication of blood-related cancers and supports the treatment of people in the United States who suffer from them; and

Whereas the Senate will continue efforts to provide support at all levels for research and other efforts that will lead to a complete cure for leukemia, lymphoma, and myeloma: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved, That the Senate designates September 2005, as "Leukemia, Lymphoma, and Myeloma Awareness Month" to—*

(1) enhance the understanding of blood-related cancers;

(2) encourage participation in voluntary activities to support education programs; and

(3) support the funding of research programs to find a cure for blood-related cancers.

#### PASSAGE OF H.R. 2862

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, this afternoon, the Senate passed the Commerce,

Justice, and Science appropriations bill with overwhelming bipartisan support. I want to thank my colleagues for their tremendous work on this legislation. This appropriations bill funds critical Government functions and includes significant Katrina-related measures.

Earlier this afternoon, I had the opportunity to thank both Senators SHELBY and MIKULSKI for their great leadership on this bill. There was a fair amount of juggling in terms of scheduling, given the fact that the Judiciary hearings were underway. Everybody showed good patience, and we produced a very good bill.

More than 350,000 families have been made homeless by the disaster that has unfolded over the last 2 weeks. The bill we passed today provides Federal housing assistance of up to \$600 per family per month for up to 6 months to help those families get back on their feet. Families lost their homes, they have lost their communities, they have lost their jobs, and many families have lost everything. Their only possessions were contained sometimes in a single black plastic bag as they fled their homes.

These are extraordinary circumstances and they require extraordinary actions on our part. As you heard by the legislation that was passed, we are acting responsibly and aggressively in meeting the needs of those victims. Helping these families put a roof over their heads is one aspect of the real tragedy that has unfolded.

I thank people such as Senator SNOWE for her hard work to help the small businesses recover. All of these efforts are part of this larger effort to respond and respond aggressively.

Under the bipartisan leadership of Senator GRASSLEY and Senator BAUCUS, today the Senate passed a comprehensive tax relief package to help spur that economic process of getting people back on their feet and rebirth and regrowth.

The Grassley-Baucus legislation provides immediate and aggressive tax relief to help hurricane victims build their homes, restore their possessions, find housing, and find jobs. It allows them to dip into their retirement plans to cover short-term expenses without being penalized.

In addition, it promotes and rewards charitable giving. As we have seen over the last week and a half, Americans have poured out their hearts for the hurricane victims. In just over 2 weeks, private individuals and businesses have donated well over \$700 million in contributions. That is increasing every day. It is truly a testament to the character of the American people, to that wonderful spirit of the American people, that selflessness, that unselfishness, their compassion, and their generosity.

Here in the Senate, we are working hard to reflect those values and to deliver swift and meaningful actions.

Chairmen are working with ranking members to finish conversations so they can forward appropriate, well-thought-out Katrina legislation to myself and to the minority leader for possible Senate action, and Chairman ENZI is working with Senator KENNEDY on a series of temporary education law changes.

These measures will help tens of thousands of students affected by Katrina, as well as the school districts that are absorbing these displaced students.

Chairman COLLINS continues her work with Senator LIEBERMAN to cut through redtape and bureaucracy so that FEMA can quickly remove the vast amounts of debris that have been left in the disaster's wake.

Tomorrow, in 12 hours or so, Senator REID and I will be departing and leading a 14-Member Senate delegation to the gulf coast. Our purpose will be to survey the disaster sites in all three States affected by Katrina, to visit with people who have been so dramatically affected, both directly and indirectly, whose lives have been changed, to observe what is being done by local officials and State officials, as well as Federal officials on the ground.

The hurricane victims are the Senate's No. 1 priority, and it is reflected in the legislation that we are addressing and in the time spent both on the floor and by the various chairmen and ranking members on committees.

We are determined that the gulf coast will be able to recover and be rebuilt bigger, stronger, and more prosperous than ever before. It is going to require a lot of leadership from all sectors, at the private and public arena, and at Federal-State and local levels.

It is going to require the dedication of a lot of individuals.

I began today meeting with 100 or so leaders from across Louisiana who already had a previously scheduled meeting to come to Washington, DC. I met with Senator VITTER to listen to their ideas and their thoughts at the local level of how best to contribute to this rebuilding of this vital part of Louisiana.

Tomorrow, we will meet with people all along that southern coast of Mississippi as well. I will actually be going to Alabama as well. It is this dedication of individuals, the doers, the thinkers, people thinking inside and outside the box that I am convinced will lead to this revitalization and appropriate rebuilding. It is a massive undertaking, but this is America and we like our challenges big. We can respond in an appropriately big way. We will make history proud.

In about 30 minutes, the President will be addressing the Nation on many of these same issues. I look forward to hearing that address. I look forward to continuing to work in a bipartisan way. We have to keep things bipartisan as we work to develop meaningful, long-term solutions for the American people.

I had one big disappointment today, late this afternoon regarding receiving a letter from my counterpart, the Democratic leader, whom I know carefully considered the terms of the outcome, but I was disappointed in that the notification was that the Senate Democrats will boycott our proposal for a bipartisan joint congressional investigation into the government's response to Hurricane Katrina. It is clear the government has no greater responsibility than protecting the security and the lives of senior citizens, and in the aftermath of this devastating hurricane and the flood which followed we saw government at all levels not live up to expectations, and, really, fail at all levels.

It is our duty, and it is our responsibility in the Senate, in Congress, to analyze and to investigate, provide aggressive oversight in order to figure out what went wrong, in order to know what changes must be made and to make those changes quickly and responsibly and to keep what went wrong from ever, ever, happening again.

Congress is going to step up to this important responsibility. We have begun that in the actions over the last 2 weeks.

Under the proposal I gave the Democrat leader, we would appoint a select committee with the members of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee as members who would participate. While the Democrat leader in his letter to me says he prefers to let the Homeland Security Committee lead the investigation and he will continue to support the committee's efforts, which I do, as well, he somehow feels the select committee that our leadership has proposed, which is made up of the very same members of that committee, Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, will somehow fail the American people or will somehow be partisan or will somehow not be independent.

To me, it is an abdication of our responsibility not to have this select committee specifically made up to analyze and to investigate what went wrong.

The proposal was modeled on some of the most serious investigations that Congress has ever taken. Looking back to the 1973 Watergate Committee, the 1986 Iran-Contra Committee, the 1994 and 1995 Whitewater Committee, and the 1997 campaign finance investigation, that is the model which I had proposed to the Democrat leader. Republicans in both the House and Senate are prepared to fulfill our constitutional obligations. I believe this boycott is irresponsible, it is an abdication of our responsibility. It begins to place partisan politics over finding answers for the American people.

We cannot wait 3 years for those answers. We need to investigate them and analyze the problems so we will have solutions in the short term, so we can quickly make changes and protect all

Americans. In challenging times, our country expects its leaders to work together and not to engage in any sort of petty bickering that slows down the process. It is time to get it done. The American people deserve better.

I ask unanimous consent my proposal to Senator REID and his letter rejecting it be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. RES. \_\_\_\_

*Resolved,*

**SECTION 1. ESTABLISHMENT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE.**

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—There is established a special committee administered by the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs to be known as the “Special Bipartisan Committee to Investigate the Preparation for and Response to Hurricane Katrina” (referred to in this resolution as the “special committee”).

(b) **PURPOSES.**—The purposes of the special committee are—

(1) to conduct an investigation and public hearings into, and study of—

(A) the development, coordination, and execution by local, State and Federal authorities of emergency response plans and other activities in preparation for Hurricane Katrina;

(B) the Federal, State, and local government response to Hurricane Katrina; and

(C) any other matter under the jurisdiction of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs to the extent that investigation of that matter assists the committee in its investigation under subparagraphs (A) and (B);

(2) to make such findings of fact and recommendations as are warranted and appropriate; and

(3) to fulfill the constitutional oversight and informational functions of the Congress with respect to the matters described in this section.

**SEC. 2. MEMBERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE.**

(a) **MEMBERSHIP.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The special committee shall consist of—

(A) the members of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; and

(B) the chairman and ranking member of [TO BE SUPPLIED].

(2) **ADDITIONAL RULES.**—The special committee may adopt additional rules or procedures not inconsistent with this resolution or the Standing Rules of the Senate that it determines are necessary to enable the special committee to conduct the investigation, study, and hearings authorized by this resolution. Any such additional rules and procedures shall become effective upon publication in the Congressional Record.

(b) **ORGANIZATION OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE.**—

(1) **CHAIRMAN.**—The chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs shall serve as the chairman of the special committee (referred to in this resolution as the “chairman”).

(2) **RANKING MEMBER.**—The ranking member of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs shall serve as the ranking member of the special committee (referred to in this resolution as the “ranking member”).

(3) **QUORUM.**—A majority of the members of the special committee shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of reporting a matter or recommendation to the Senate. A majority of the members of the special committee,

or one-third of the members of the special committee if at least one member of the minority party is present, shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of other business. One member of the special committee shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking testimony.

(c) **RULES AND PROCEDURES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as otherwise specifically provided in this resolution, the special committee’s investigation, study, and hearings shall be governed by the Standing Rules of the Senate and the Rules of Procedure of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

(2) **ADDITIONAL RULES.**—The special committee may adopt additional rules or procedures not inconsistent with this resolution or the Standing Rules of the Senate if the chairman and ranking member agree that such additional rules or procedures are necessary to enable the special committee to conduct the investigation, study, and hearings authorized by this resolution. Any such additional rules and procedures shall become effective upon publication in the Congressional Record.

**SEC. 3. STAFF OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE.**

(a) **APPOINTMENTS.**—To assist the special committee in the investigation, study, and hearings authorized by this resolution, the chairman and the ranking member each may appoint special committee staff, including consultants.

(b) **ASSISTANCE FROM THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL.**—The Comptroller General of the United States is requested to provide from the Government Accountability Office whatever personnel or other appropriate assistance as may be required by the special committee, or by the chairman or the ranking member.

**SEC. 4. POWERS OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE.**

The special committee may exercise all of the powers and responsibilities of a committee under rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate and section 705 of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, including the following:

(1) **SUBPOENA POWERS.**—To issue subpoenas or orders for the attendance of witnesses or for the production of documentary or physical evidence before the special committee. A subpoena or order may be authorized by the special committee or by the chairman with the agreement of the ranking member, and may be issued by the chairman or any other member of the special committee designated by the chairman, and may be served by any person designated by the chairman or the authorized member anywhere within or outside of the borders of the United States to the full extent permitted by law. The chairman, or any other member of the special committee, is authorized to administer oaths to any witnesses appearing before the special committee. If a return on a subpoena or order for the production of documentary or physical evidence is incomplete or accompanied by an objection, the chairman (in consultation with the ranking member) may convene a meeting or hearing to determine the adequacy of the return and to rule on the objection. At a meeting or hearing on such a return, one member of the special committee shall constitute a quorum. The special committee shall not initiate procedures leading to civil or criminal enforcement of a subpoena unless the person or entity to whom the subpoena is directed refuses to produce the required documentary or physical evidence after having been ordered and directed to do so.

(2) **COMPENSATION AUTHORITY.**—To employ and fix the compensation of such clerical, investigatory, legal, technical, and other assistants as the special committee, or the

chairman or the ranking member, considers necessary or appropriate.

(3) **MEETINGS.**—To sit and act at any time or place during sessions, recesses, and adjournment periods of the Senate.

(4) **HEARINGS.**—To hold hearings, take testimony under oath, and receive documentary or physical evidence relating to the matters and questions it is authorized to investigate or study.

(5) **TESTIMONY OF WITNESSES.**—To require by subpoena or order the attendance, as a witness before the special committee or at a deposition, of any person who may have knowledge or information concerning any of the matters that the special committee is authorized to investigate and study.

(6) **IMMUNITY.**—To grant a witness immunity under sections 6002 and 6005 of title 18, United States Code.

(7) **DEPOSITIONS.**—To take depositions and other testimony under oath anywhere within the United States, to issue orders that require witnesses to answer written interrogatories under oath. All depositions shall be conducted jointly by majority and minority staff of the special committee. A witness at a deposition shall be examined upon oath administered by a member of the special committee or an individual authorized by local law to administer oaths, and a complete transcription or electronic recording of the deposition shall be made. Questions shall be propounded first by majority staff of the special committee and then by minority staff of the special committee. Any subsequent round of questioning shall proceed in the same order. Objections by the witness as to the form of questions shall be noted for the record. If a witness objects to a question and refuses to answer on the basis of relevance or privilege, the special committee staff may proceed with the deposition, or may, at that time or at a subsequent time, seek a ruling on the objection from the chairman. If the chairman overrules the objection, the chairman may order and direct the witness to answer the question, but the special committee shall not initiate procedures leading to civil or criminal enforcement unless the witness refuses to answer after having been ordered and directed to answer.

(8) **DELEGATIONS TO STAFF.**—To issue commissions and to notice depositions for staff members to examine witnesses and to receive evidence under oath administered by an individual authorized by local law to administer oaths. The special committee, or the chairman with the concurrence of the ranking member, may delegate to designated staff members of the special committee the power to issue deposition notices authorized pursuant to this paragraph.

(9) **INFORMATION FROM OTHER SOURCES.**—To require by subpoena or order—

(A) any department, agency, entity, officer, or employee of the United States Government;

(B) any person or entity purporting to act under color or authority of State or local law; or

(C) any private person, firm, corporation, partnership, or other organization;

to produce for consideration by the special committee or for use as evidence in the investigation, study, or hearings of the special committee, any book, check, canceled check, correspondence, communication, document, financial record, electronic record, paper, physical evidence, photograph, record, recording, tape, or any other material relating to any of the matters or questions that the special committee is authorized to investigate and study which any such person or entity may possess or control.

(10) **RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE SENATE.**—To make to the Senate any recommendations,

by report or resolution, including recommendations for criminal or civil enforcement, which the special committee may consider appropriate with respect to—

(A) the willful failure or refusal of any person to appear before it, or at a deposition, or to answer interrogatories, in compliance with a subpoena or order;

(B) the willful failure or refusal of any person to answer questions or give testimony during the appearance of that person as a witness before the special committee, or at a deposition, or in response to interrogatories; or

(C) the willful failure or refusal of—

(i) any officer or employee of the United States Government;

(ii) any person or entity purporting to act under color or authority of State or local law; or

(iii) any private person, partnership, firm, corporation, or organization;

to produce before the special committee, or at a deposition, or at any time or place designated by the committee, any book, check, canceled check, correspondence, communication, document, financial record, electronic record, paper, physical evidence, photograph, record, recording, tape, or any other material in compliance with any subpoena or order.

(1) CONSULTANTS.—To procure the temporary or intermittent services of individual consultants, or organizations thereof.

(2) OTHER GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL.—To use, on a reimbursable basis and with the prior consent of the Government department or agency concerned, the services of the personnel of such department or agency.

(13) OTHER CONGRESSIONAL STAFF.—To use, with the prior consent of any member of the Senate or the chairman or the ranking member of any other Senate committee or the chairman or ranking member of any subcommittee of any committee of the Senate, the facilities or services of the appropriate members of the staff of such member of the Senate or other Senate committee or subcommittee, whenever the special committee or the chairman or the ranking member considers that such action is necessary or appropriate to enable the special committee to conduct the investigation, study, and hearings authorized by this resolution.

(14) ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND EVIDENCE.—To permit any members of the special committee, staff director, counsel, or other staff members or consultants designated by the chairman or the ranking member, access to any data, evidence, information, report, analysis, document, or paper—

(A) that relates to any of the matters or questions that the special committee is authorized to investigate or study under this resolution;

(B) that is in the custody or under the control of any department, agency, entity, officer, or employee of the United States Government, including those which have the power under the laws of the United States to investigate any alleged criminal activities or to prosecute persons charged with crimes against the United States without regard to the jurisdiction or authority of any other Senate committee or subcommittee; and

(C) that will assist the special committee to prepare for or conduct the investigation, study, and hearings authorized by this resolution.

(15) REPORTS OF VIOLATIONS OF LAW.—To report possible violations of any law to appropriate Federal, State, or local authorities.

(16) EXPENDITURES.—To expend, to the extent that the special committee determines necessary and appropriate, any money made available to the special committee by the Senate to carry out this resolution.

#### SEC. 5. SALARIES AND EXPENSES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—A sum equal to not more than \$500,000 for the period beginning on the date of adoption of this resolution and ending on February 15, 2006, shall be made available from the contingent fund of the Senate out of the Account for Expenses for Inquiries and Investigations for payment of salaries and other expenses of the special committee under this resolution, which shall include not more than [ \$\_\_\_\_\_ ] for the procurement of the services of individual consultants or organizations thereof, in accordance with section 4(11).

(b) VOUCHER REQUIREMENT.—Payment of expenses shall be disbursed upon vouchers approved by the chairman, except that vouchers shall not be required for the disbursement of salaries paid at an annual rate.

#### SEC. 6. REPORTS; TERMINATION.

(a) COMPLETION OF DUTIES.—

(1) COMPLETION.—The special committee shall make every reasonable effort to complete, not later than February 15, 2006, the investigation, study, and hearings authorized by section 1.

(2) INTERIM REPORTS.—The special committee shall also submit to the Senate such interim reports as it considers appropriate.

(3) RECORDS.—All records of the special committee shall be transferred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs on termination of the special committee.

(b) TERMINATION.—After submission of its final report, the special committee shall conclude its business and close out its affairs within 90 days.

#### SEC. 7. COMMITTEE JURISDICTION AND RULE XXV.

The jurisdiction of the special committee is granted pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of rule XXV of the Standing Rules of the Senate relating to the jurisdiction of the standing committees of the Senate.

#### SEC. 8. COORDINATION WITH HOUSE INVESTIGATION.

The chairman of the special committee, in conducting the investigation and study described in section 1, shall consult with the chairman of the House Select Committee Investigate the Response to Hurricane Katrina conducting the parallel investigation and study regarding meeting jointly to receive testimony, the scheduling of hearings or issuance of subpoenas, and joint staff interviews of key witnesses.

SEPTEMBER 15, 2005.

The Hon. WILLIAM FRIST,  
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR BILL: Thank you for providing me with your proposal to have the Senate establish a select committee to review this nation's preparation for and response to Hurricane Katrina. Like you, I believe it is vitally important that we learn why our government's leaders failed to perform one of their most essential and basic tasks—protecting the American people from natural or man-made disasters and swiftly coming to their aid when such incidents occur. The survivors of this tragedy and all Americans have a right to expect that their leaders will make every effort to understand what went wrong so that we can identify and implement the steps necessary to ensure that what we witnessed this past month in the Gulf Coast never happens again.

As you know, under regular Senate order, the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs would take the lead in any investigation of the government's actions on Katrina and other disasters. This committee has both the authority under Senate rules and the demonstrated ex-

perience to conduct such an investigation. At the outset of our discussions about the best way for the Senate to proceed on this matter, I expressed my preference for letting this committee handle the Katrina investigation. I also said I would be willing to consider departing from regular Senate order to establish a select committee if I was confident such a committee could do a better job of providing the survivors and the American people the answers they deserve.

Unfortunately, after closely analyzing the proposal you presented to me earlier this week I have concluded it fails that critical test for one very, simple reason. As currently drafted, I do not believe your proposed select committee will conduct an independent, non-partisan investigation that will take a hard look at actions by both the Bush Administration and this Congress. As a result, your proposal will not provide the American people the assurances that we have learned every lesson from this tragedy and have developed the corrective measures necessary to make our country more secure in the future.

Consequently, I will continue my push for an independent, blue ribbon commission similar to what we established in the wake of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Democrats and, ultimately, Republicans agreed that approach was the best way to help the American people understand why their government failed them that awful day. And the commission's findings were broadly supported and embraced by the American people and leaders of both parties because they understood that, unlike any congressional body, the commission was uniquely capable of asking tough questions of both the Administration and the Congress.

Senator Clinton has proposed that we follow this proven model in the case of Katrina and I have yet to hear a compelling reason why we should not. At the same time, I will also continue to support the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee's efforts to investigate Katrina. Chairman Collins and Ranking Member Lieberman have worked well together in a bipartisan manner in the past and I am confident they will continue to do so in the future.

I remain hopeful that you will eventually agree to work with me to establish a truly independent commission to provide the American people answers about why their government failed them and what steps can be taken to ensure it never happens again. The survivors of this tragedy and the American people deserve no less.

Sincerely,

HARRY REID,  
U.S. Senate.

#### ORDERS FOR MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2005

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today it adjourn until 2 p.m. on Monday, September 19. I further ask that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved, and the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with the time equally divided until 3 p.m.

I further ask consent that at 3 p.m. the Senate resume consideration of H.R. 2744, the Agriculture appropriations bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.