

TOM DAVIS, VIRGINIA,
CHAIRMAN

CHRISTOPHER SHAYS, CONNECTICUT
DAN BURTON, INDIANA
ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, FLORIDA
JOHN M. McHUGH, NEW YORK
JOHN L. MICA, FLORIDA
GIL GUTKNECHT, MINNESOTA
MARK E. SOUDER, INDIANA
STEVEN C. LATOURETTE, OHIO
TODD RUSSELL PLATTS, PENNSYLVANIA
CHRIS CANNON, UTAH
JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR., TENNESSEE
CANDICE MILLER, MICHIGAN
MICHAEL R. TURNER, OHIO
DARRELL ISSA, CALIFORNIA
VIRGINIA BROWN-WAITE, FLORIDA
JON C. PORTER, NEVADA
KENNY MARCHANT, TEXAS
LYNN A. WESTMORELAND, GEORGIA
PATRICK T. McHENRY, NORTH CAROLINA
CHARLES W. DENT, PENNSYLVANIA
VIRGINIA FOXX, NORTH CAROLINA

ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5074
FACSIMILE (202) 225-3974
MINORITY (202) 225-5051
TTY (202) 225-6852

<http://reform.house.gov>

HENRY A. WAXMAN, CALIFORNIA,
RANKING MINORITY MEMBER

TOM LANTOS, CALIFORNIA
MAJOR R. OWENS, NEW YORK
EDOLPHUS TOWNS, NEW YORK
PAUL E. KANJORSKI, PENNSYLVANIA
CAROLYN B. MALONEY, NEW YORK
ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS, MARYLAND
DENNIS J. KUCINICH, OHIO
DANNY K. DAVIS, ILLINOIS
Wm. LACY CLAY, MISSOURI
DIANE E. WATSON, CALIFORNIA
STEPHEN F. LYNCH, MASSACHUSETTS
CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, MARYLAND
LINDA T. SANCHEZ, CALIFORNIA
C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER,
MARYLAND
BRIAN HIGGINS, NEW YORK
ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON,
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

BERNARD SANDERS, VERMONT,
INDEPENDENT

September 27, 2005

The Honorable Susan M. Collins
461 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman
706 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Collins and Senator Lieberman:

I am writing about Senator Collins's comments today that indicate she believes it is unusual for congressional committees to receive testimony from individuals who work in the White House.¹ As you consider your investigative plan for calling witnesses to discuss Hurricane Katrina preparedness and response, I wanted to make sure you are aware that there is ample precedent in which congressional committees obtained testimony from White House officials.

According to an October 6, 2004, report by the Congressional Research Service, precedent for congressional committees receiving testimony from presidential advisers dates back many years, involves a wide range of congressional committees, and includes top level White House positions.² I am attaching the CRS report, which contains a 14-page list of examples.³

In the House Committee on Government Reform alone, dozens of White House officials testified under oath during the Clinton Administration. The Committee deposed or took hearing

¹ See *Former FEMA Director Blames La. Officials for Katrina Response Failures*, washingtonpost.com (quoting Senator Collins as stating that "members of the president's staff 'usually don't testify to Congress'") (Sept. 27, 2005).

² Congressional Research Service, *Presidential Advisers' Testimony Before Congressional Committees: An Overview* (Oct. 6, 2004).

³ See *Id.* at 7-21.

The Honorable Susan M. Collins
The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman
September 27, 2005
Page 2

testimony from over 100 individuals who worked in the White House. These officials included the following top White House advisors:

- Erskine Bowles, Chief of Staff to the President
- Mack McLarty, Chief of Staff to the President
- John Podesta, Chief of Staff to the President
- Bruce Lindsey, Assistant to the President and Deputy Counsel to the President
- Harold Ickes, Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff
- Jack Quinn, Counsel to the President
- Charles Ruff, Counsel to the President
- Beth Nolan, Counsel to the President
- Bernard Nussbaum, Counsel to the President
- Roy Neel, Chief of Staff to the Vice President
- Margaret Williams, Chief of Staff to the First Lady and Assistant to the President
- Lanny Breuer, Special Counsel to the President
- Cheryl Mills, Deputy Counsel to the President
- Mark Lindsay, Assistant to the President for Management and Administration
- Douglas Sosnick, Assistant to the President and Director of Political Affairs
- John Emerson, Deputy Assistant to the President
- Bob Nash, Assistant to the President and Director of Presidential Personnel
- Marsha Scott, Deputy Director and Chief of Staff of Presidential Personnel

I hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely,



Henry A. Waxman
Ranking Minority Member

Enclosure