

EDWARD J. MARKEY
7TH DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS

ENERGY AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE

RANKING MEMBER
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND
THE INTERNET

SELECT COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY

RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2107

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March 16, 2007

The Honorable David Price
Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee
on Homeland Security
B-307 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harold Rogers
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee
on Homeland Security
2406 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Price and Ranking Member Rogers:

As you know, the Bush Administration's Fiscal Year 2008 budget requests no funding for the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS), the only federal program that helps first responders, medical personnel, emergency management workers, businesses and other stakeholders develop effective, integrated capabilities to minimize casualties in the event of a terrorist attack using a weapon of mass destruction, natural disaster or public health emergency.

We thank you for your past support of the MMRS program and request that you once again support this vital program with funding at the \$60 million level, which we expect the Department to distribute in a manner it deems appropriate and effective. As you may know, in May 2006, during consideration of H.R. 5351, the National Emergency Management Reform and Enhancement Act, the Homeland Security Committee supported, on a bi-partisan basis, the authorization of funding for MMRS at \$60 million. Moreover, additional responsibilities placed on MMRS, such as response to an avian flu pandemic, combined with the need to keep pharmaceutical caches adequately supplied and resources in good working order, indicate that an increase in funding to \$60 million is needed.

MMRS was established in the wake of the deadly release of sarin nerve gas in a Tokyo subway and the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Building in Oklahoma City in 1995. The program provides funds to 125 municipal authorities in 43 states for local first responder planning, training, exercises, equipment, and pharmaceutical caches (see attached list of MMRS funding recipients).

MMRS provides unique services that are urgently needed, given the determination of terrorist groups to acquire a weapon of mass destruction and detonate it inside our country, the severe preparedness gaps exposed by the failed response to Hurricane Katrina and the emerging potential for an avian flu pandemic.

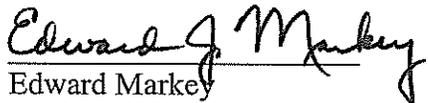
Letter to Appropriators
MMRS
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MMRS program guidance requires the enhancement of local capabilities for coordinating local fire, police, hospital, and public health agencies in the event of a terrorist attack, act of nature or public health incident. This planning includes preparing for treatment of 1,000 or more casualties, triage, direct distribution of vaccines and other pharmaceuticals, and protection of medical facilities in the immediate post-incident time period before sufficient external resources can arrive and become operational.

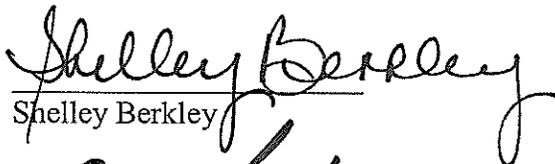
In the shadow of these threats, local first responders and "first receivers" (e.g., doctors, emergency medical technicians, public health officials) must be prepared to act in a coordinated fashion and have the specialized equipment, training and information infrastructure to do so. MMRS is the only federal program that directly supports and encourages the coordination of such an integrated approach to the management of highly destructive events in order to minimize casualties.

Thank you for your strong support for MMRS during the FY07 appropriations process. We respectfully request that you continue to support the emergency personnel in our local municipalities through a \$60 million appropriation for MMRS in FY08. These "hometown heroes" will be on the front lines in the event of a major terror attack, natural disaster or public health emergency.

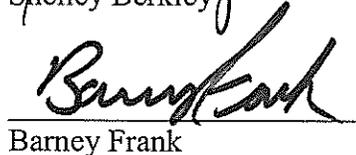
Sincerely,


Edward Markey


Jane Harman


Shelley Berkley

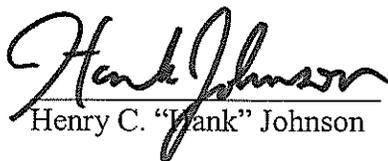

Timothy H. Bishop

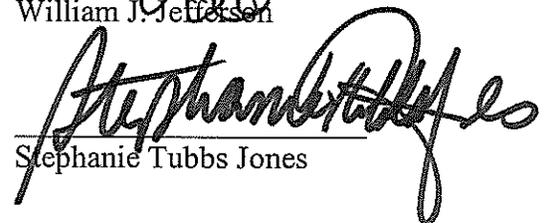

Barney Frank


Mazie K. Hirono


Darlene Hooley


William J. Jefferson


Henry C. "Frank" Johnson

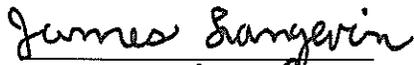

Stephanie Tubbs Jones

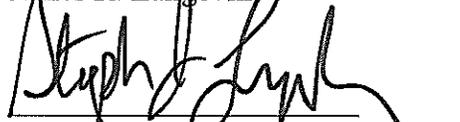
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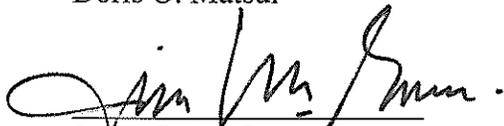
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Jim Matheson


James R. Langevin


Stephen F. Lynch


Doris O. Matsui


James P. McGovern

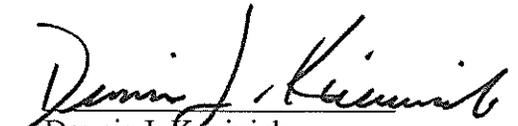

Eleanor Holmes Norton


David G. Reichert


Adam B. Schiff


Ellen O. Tauscher


Diana Degette


Dennis J. Kucinich


Carolyn B. Maloney


Jim McDermott


James P. Moran

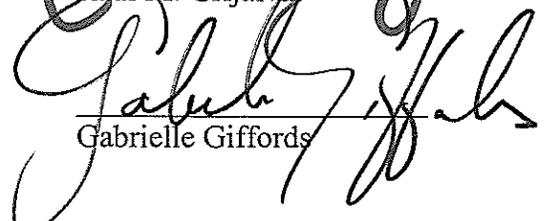

Donald M. Payne


Loretta Sanchez


Fortney Pete Stark


John A. Yarmuth

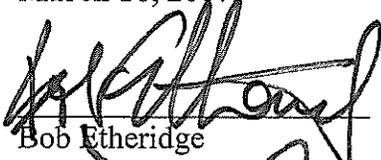

Raul M. Grijalva


Gabrielle Giffords

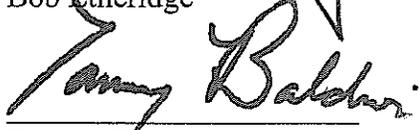
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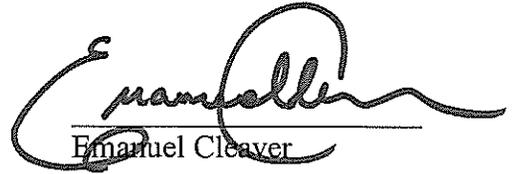
Bob Etheridge



Tammy Baldwin



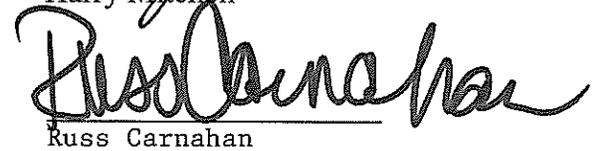
Joe Baca



Emanuel Cleaver



Harry Mitchell



Russ Carnahan