



**HOUSE ARMED SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE ON TERRORISM AND  
UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS  
JIM SAXTON, NEW JERSEY  
CHAIRMAN**

**PRESS RELEASE**

---

For Immediate Release:  
November 9, 2005

Contact: Josh Holly (HASC), 202-225-2539 or  
Greg Keeley (SAXTON), 202-225-4765

**OPENING STATEMENT OF JIM SAXTON**

***Joint Hearing on “Responding to Catastrophic Events:  
The Role of the Military and National Guard in Disaster Response”***

**Washington, D.C.** – The Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities meets this morning in joint session with our colleagues from the Committee on Homeland Security’s Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Science and Technology to discuss and understand the role of the Military and National Guard in responding to catastrophic events. It is no surprise that the Department of Defense and Homeland Security share similar joint interests across a range of areas, and we hope to foster and encourage greater cooperation than already exists between these two vitally important executive branch departments.

Nothing we do in Congress is more important than national security. DOD and DHS are the lead federal agencies in assuring the safety and security of the American public and must work together in a seamless fashion as they work to deter and defeat terrorism.

The importance of military preparedness to deal with a catastrophic event cannot be overstated. While Hurricane Katrina demonstrated the great challenges our leaders face when implementing an emergency response plan, we have to remember that in the case of Katrina we had three days warning. In the case of a terrorist attack we will not have the luxury of a warning.

As Chairman of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Terrorism and Unconventional Threats, I am constantly reminded that Global Jihadists actively seek to carry out a catastrophic event on our soil. This threat, therefore, makes the military's response capability a matter of seminal importance.

It is precisely because of the threat posed by the nexus of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction that the Terrorism Subcommittee began working on this hearing with the Homeland Security Committee prior to Hurricane Katrina striking the Gulf States.

While it is not within the purview of this hearing to address the Federal response to hurricane Katrina, today's hearing will focus on some of the issues raised subsequent to Katrina. Much of this interest surrounds statements made by President on September 15<sup>th</sup> in Louisiana where he called for an increased role for the military in responding to catastrophic events. I am curious to hear if our witnesses have anything more to say on this proposal.

Fortunately, since September 11<sup>th</sup> our country has prevented al-Qaeda, and similar Jihadist groups, from perpetrating another attack on U.S. soil. Our success in prevention, however, should not make us lax in our preparedness to deal with an attack in the event it occurs. We must be ready.

###

<http://armedservices.house.gov/>