

Sept 20 2005 - Rep. Slaughter Renews Call for Independent Katrina Commission

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Reacts to Republican Leadership's Incomplete Retreat from Politicized Katrina Probe

Washington, DC - Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY), Ranking Member of the House Rules Committee, today reacted to the announcement by Republican Leaders that a proposed joint House-Senate partisan committee designed to investigate Hurricane Katrina has been abandoned.

Rep. Slaughter made the following statement in response to the disclosure:

"In the wake of a national tragedy, in the face of a woefully inadequate government response to a disaster which could have been prevented, the job of our Congress is clear. The American people demand, and we in the House and Senate have a sworn duty to deliver, a fair and impartial evaluation of why our government left so many people to fend for themselves in their hour of need.

To fulfill our responsibilities, we are renewing our call for the creation of an independent commission to investigate the government's response to Katrina, a commission modeled on the universally respected 9/11 Commission, which examined the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

I'm pleased the Republican leadership has walked away from their disingenuous plan to form a partisan investigative committee but this partial concession simply isn't enough.

Hundreds if not thousands of Americans are dead. Hundreds of thousands more are homeless. Why can't the Republicans understand that it's time to take the impending investigation of what went wrong out of the political arena, to make it the job of impartial, non-governmental officials whose only allegiance will be to uncover the truth about what happened, and what needs to change?

The Republican Leadership wants to preserve its hold on power by any means necessary, even when American lives have been lost. Well, power isn't everything - truth, accountability, and responsible governance are what's important.

We need a new 9/11 Commission for Hurricane Katrina. The American people deserve no less. The Republican Majority needs to remember that its primary loyalty must be to the citizens of this nation, not to its own political viability."