

such as a terrorist attack using chemical or biological weapons.

Leaders at every level of government have a responsibility to confront dangers before they appear and engage the American people on the best course of action. It is vital that our Nation discuss and address the threat of pandemic flu now. There is no pandemic flu in our country or in the world at this time, but if we wait for a pandemic to appear, it will be too late to prepare, and one day many lives could be needlessly lost because we failed to act today.

By preparing now, we can give our citizens some peace of mind knowing that our Nation is ready to act at the first sign of danger and that we have the plans in place to prevent and, if necessary, withstand an influenza pandemic.

Thank you for coming today to let me outline my strategy. Thank the United States Congress for considering this measure. May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:04 a.m. in the William H. Natcher Conference Center at the National Institutes of Health. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

Letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives on Funding for the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Preparedness and Response

November 1, 2005

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Today, I outlined a strategy to address the threat of avian and pandemic influenza. This strategy is designed to meet three critical goals: to detect and contain outbreaks before they spread across the world, to protect the American people by stockpiling vaccines and antiviral drugs and accelerating the development of new vaccine technologies, and to ensure that Federal, State, and local communities are prepared for potential domestic outbreaks.

To provide the necessary resources to immediately begin the implementation of this strategy, I ask the Congress to consider the enclosed requests, totaling \$7.1 billion, for

the Departments of Health and Human Services, Agriculture, Defense, Homeland Security, the Interior, State, and Veterans Affairs, as well as for International Assistance Programs.

I hereby designate the proposals in the amount requested herein as emergency requirements, and I urge the Congress to act expeditiously on this request to ensure the country is prepared for this growing danger.

The details of this request are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

Executive Order 13389—Creation of the Gulf Coast Recovery and Rebuilding Council

November 1, 2005

By the authority vested in me as President of the United States by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 5121–5206) (the “Stafford Act”), and in order to further strengthen Federal support for the recovery and rebuilding of the Gulf Coast region affected by Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Policy. It is the policy of the United States to provide effective, integrated, and fiscally responsible support from across the Federal Government to support State, local, and tribal governments, the private sector, and faith-based and other community humanitarian relief organizations in the recovery and rebuilding of the Gulf Coast region affected by Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita.

Sec. 2. Establishment. (a) There is established, within the Executive Office of the President, the Gulf Coast Recovery and Rebuilding Council (the “Council”). The Assistant to the President for Economic Policy shall serve as the Chairman of the Council (the “Chairman”). The Council shall consist exclusively of the following members or full-time Federal officers or employees designated by them, respectively: