



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

August 23, 2005

President George Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush:

We write in strong support of the appointment of R. David Paulison, the current Administrator of the U.S. Fire Administration, who is reportedly being considered for the new position of Undersecretary for Preparedness in the Department of Homeland Security. We believe that he has the knowledge, experience and ability to serve the nation well in this important position.

Mr. Paulison is extraordinarily well suited for this important position, with 30 years of service and experience in the field. He is a certified paramedic with first-hand knowledge of the capabilities, needs and challenges of first responders. He was Chief of the Miami-Dade County Fire Rescue Department, where he commanded a force of 1,900 first-responder personnel with a \$200 million operating budget and a \$70 million capital budget. In this capacity, he also oversaw the Miami-Dade County Emergency Management Office and the world-renown Miami-Dade Urban Search and Rescue Task Force, which is often called upon to respond to disasters all over the world.

Mr. Paulison has experience managing major disasters, including Hurricane Andrew, still the most devastating hurricane to hit the U.S. mainland, and the crash of ValuJet Flight 592 in the Florida Everglades. He is a recognized leader with a national reputation in his field, having served as president of the International Association of Fire Chiefs. Finally, Mr. Paulison is also an experienced administrator. Before being named as U.S. Fire Administrator, Mr. Paulison served as FEMA's Director of the Preparedness Division of the Emergency Preparedness and Response Directorate.

The Department of Homeland Security's Directorate for Preparedness will facilitate grants and oversee nationwide preparedness efforts supporting first responder training, citizen awareness, public health, infrastructure and cybersecurity and ensure proper steps are taken to protect high-risk targets.

Pursuant to Secretary Chertoff's organizational change, the directorate will also include the U.S. Fire Administration and the Office of State and Local Government Coordination and Preparedness responsible for grants, training, and exercises.

We believe that R. David Paulson would be a sound choice for this important office, and we recommend him to you.

Sincerely,

Kendrick B. Meek

Albert H. Hastings

Corine Brown

Lincoln Diaz-Balart

Randy

Jim Davis

Tom Feeney

Mark W. Wolf

Tom Feeney

Debra Wassensh

Jeff Miller

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Neena R. Lethin F. Allen Boyd