

RESPONSE TO SENATE COMMITTEE ON DISASTER

Initiatives to deal with the preparation for and aversion of hurricane disasters were initiated in 1995 by FEMA. I was one of three locals on a panel of 25 people nationwide. That initiative ended with a lack of funding.

I would suggest any program have strong local guidance, or at least insure that the federal parts have a great deal of local disaster experience. Experience overrides research, training and exercises when dealing with emergencies. Individuals who are used to taking action have a greater understanding of the need than planners and experts in research.

It is not an accident that military and enforcement people with intellect can better deal with disasters. Disasters are overwhelming to people who look for perfect solutions. One needs people who understand and have the mindset to look for improvement in the situation until you can work to a point of searching for a solution.

James Lee Witt was effective at FEMA, not because of his political associations or even his budget. He worked at the local level of emergency management. One should not make generals from individuals who were never soldiers.

Papers/Testimony:test-respns_18OCT05.doc

In response to September 20, 2005 questions.