

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 6, 2006

Dear Colleague:

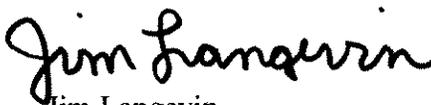
As Members of the Committee on Homeland Security, we were disturbed by numerous reports of the neglect of people with disabilities in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The devastating impact of these storms in the Gulf States on seniors, people with disabilities, and individuals who are medically dependent amplified the need to implement policies and protocols at all levels of government that will meet the needs of individuals with disabilities in emergency planning and relief.

**In response, we plan to introduce the Emergency Preparedness and Response for Individuals with Disabilities Act.** This legislation offers a comprehensive approach to ensuring that the needs of people with disabilities are met before, during and after a national disaster. Through ongoing education about special needs populations and the implementation of responsible policies, we can lessen the scope of future disasters and decrease the loss of life in a tragedy.

The bill calls for the hiring of a Disability Coordinator in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, who will report directly to the Secretary. The bill also requires that 30 percent of temporary housing for disaster victims be made accessible to individuals with disabilities, and provides incentives to create more accessible housing during reconstruction efforts.

To be prepared as a nation, we all must do our part to plan for disasters. All individuals, with or without disabilities, can mitigate the impact of a disaster by taking steps to prepare before an event occurs. To cosponsor the Emergency Preparedness and Response for Individuals with Disabilities Act, please call Amy Judge with Rep. Langevin at 5-2735 or Amy Leedecke with Rep. Weldon at 5-2011.

Sincerely,



Jim Langevin  
Member of Congress

  
Curt Weldon  
Member of Congress