

**Statement of
Senator Susan M. Collins**

**Nominations of Ivan K. Fong to be General Counsel of the
Department of Homeland Security and Timothy W. Manning to be
Deputy Administrator for National Preparedness of the Federal
Emergency Management Agency**

**Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
April 30, 2009**

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**I join the chairman in welcoming our two nominees:
Tim Manning to serve as Deputy Administrator of FEMA
for National Preparedness and Ivan Fong to be General
Counsel of the Department of Homeland Security.**

**The Office of the General Counsel at the Department
of Homeland Security is one of special interest for
members of this Committee. The General Counsel
provides legal advice to the Secretary on the missions
that Congress has assigned to DHS and on the
Department's compliance with federal laws on civil**

rights, employment, and many other matters. And the General Counsel serves as an important point of contact with Congress, especially with this oversight Committee.

The Department of Homeland Security operates a multitude of programs that are critical to promoting the safety of American citizens and the security of America's infrastructure and economy. Those programs require the cooperation and support of state and local governments and the understanding and trust of citizens if they are to succeed.

The official actions of the Department and the conduct of all its employees must therefore meet the highest standards set by the letter and spirit of the law.

I look forward to hearing the views of Mr. Fong on the reauthorizations that must occur during this session of Congress of the chemical facility security legislation

and the SAFE Port Act, both of which I co-authored. Mr. Fong has a unique perspective on cyber security and cyber crime, having handled these issues in both the private sector and at the Department of Justice and having facilitated public-private partnerships to address these challenges. I also recognize Mr. Fong's impressive legal background that would serve him well if he is confirmed.

This Committee's comprehensive investigation into the flawed response to Hurricane Katrina revealed fundamental problems with our nation's preparedness for catastrophic disasters. As a result of our Committee's work, Congress passed the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act in 2006. Our nation's ability to prepare for disasters - regardless of cause - has improved dramatically due to this legislation.

One of the important reforms in our legislation was the recombination of DHS's preparedness and response activities within FEMA. Reorganizations are never easy - but sometimes they are essential. In this case, we can already see the benefits of our actions.

Take, for instance, several of FEMA's notable successes over the past year: effective responses to multiple disasters, the new and improved National Response Framework, and the current efforts underway to develop a comprehensive national planning system.

These successes - and many more - have been accomplished by a new FEMA with its eye not only on traditional response, but with a renewed focus on improving our nation's preparedness to deal with emergencies and disasters.

While we see positive signs that FEMA is improving, there is more work to be done. If confirmed, Mr. Manning will inherit an organization facing many tough challenges - from management integration, to needed reforms of our national exercise program, to establishment of an effective preparedness assessment system. In fact, many of these challenges are mandates from the Post-Katrina Act that have not yet been met.

I look forward to hearing how Mr. Manning's background and experience will provide the National Preparedness Directorate with the guidance and leadership necessary to find solutions to these many challenges.

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