

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3604

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May 2, 2006

## 'Emergency' Funds for Retirement Home Could Pay for a New Home and Nursing Care for Nearly a Decade for All Residents

Dear Colleague,

Included in the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act now being debated by the Senate is an enormously expensive earmark that appropriates \$176 million to the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport, Mississippi.

According to the local Congressman, the cost estimate for repairing the damage caused by Katrina is between \$80 and \$90 million. The Senate bill would more than double the total amount being provided to address the damages.

In addition to the \$176 million contained within this bill, Congress provided \$45 million in the 2006 Defense appropriations bill for this facility. To date, \$44 million of that \$45 million remains unspent. This bill provides another \$176 million for this same retirement home.

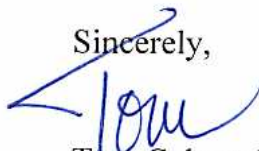
For the \$221 million in total that is being provided through this and previous appropriations for this facility, each of the up to 600 residents could be provided their very own home and free home health care services for nearly a decade.

According to the Administrators of the home and the Appropriations Committee, there is no plan available for how the money will be spent.

We owe it to our vets to fulfill our commitment to their needs but we owe it to the taxpayers to be good stewards of the funds with which we have been entrusted. For these reasons, I have introduced an amendment to strip this non-emergency funding from H.R. 4939. I urge you to support this amendment.

Please contact Derek Sparks or Matt Blackburn on my staff at 4-5754 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Tom Coburn M.D.  
United States Senator