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ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

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February 14, 2008

Mr. Brian Shea  
President  
Gulf Stream Coach, Inc.  
503 South Oakland Avenue  
Nappanee, IN 46550

Dear Mr. Shea:

I am writing regarding the Gulf Stream Coach, Inc., travel trailers sold to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) following the Gulf Coast hurricanes of 2005. These trailers were provided as housing by FEMA to victims of the hurricanes. At one time, over 100,000 trailers, including those manufactured by Gulf Stream, were being used as housing for victims of the hurricanes.<sup>1</sup> Currently, thousands of families in the Gulf Coast continue to live in the travel trailers and mobile homes manufactured by Gulf Stream and other companies.<sup>2</sup>

On July 19, 2007, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform held a hearing as part of its investigation into dangerous levels of formaldehyde in the travel trailers and manufactured homes FEMA provided to victims of the Gulf Coast hurricanes. Through its investigation, the Oversight Committee learned that numerous travel trailers and manufactured homes tested by both FEMA and a non-profit organization had levels of formaldehyde much higher than the level at which adverse health effects begin to occur.<sup>3</sup> Specific evidence obtained by the Committee indicates that travel trailers manufactured by Gulf Stream were included within this group.

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<sup>1</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency: Frequently Requested National Statistics Hurricane Katrina—One Year Later (online at [www.fema.gov/hazard/hurricane/2005katrina/anniversary.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/hazard/hurricane/2005katrina/anniversary.shtm)) (accessed on January 17, 2008).

<sup>2</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency, *Katrina and Rita Direct and Financial Assistance Housing Assistance Breakdown as of 09/25/07 (September 25, 2007)*.

<sup>3</sup> Memorandum from Majority Staff to Members of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Full Committee Hearing on FEMA's Toxic Trailers (July 19, 2007).

In order to help the Oversight Committee understand how this situation developed, I request that you provide the Committee with information on the Gulf Stream travel trailers sold to FEMA following the Gulf Coast hurricanes of 2005. Specifically, I ask that Gulf Stream provide the Oversight Committee with the following:

1. All documents related to communications between Gulf Stream and FEMA regarding formaldehyde in the Gulf Stream travel trailers sold to FEMA following the Gulf Coast hurricanes of 2005;
2. All communications between Gulf Stream and any Gulf Stream subcontractor regarding formaldehyde in the Gulf Stream travel trailers sold to FEMA following the Gulf Coast hurricanes of 2005, including all communications regarding the use of formaldehyde in the manufacture process or any process used to decrease or minimize the levels of formaldehyde; and
3. All other documents related to formaldehyde in Gulf Stream travel trailers sold to FEMA following the Gulf Coast hurricanes of 2005.

Also, please provide the Oversight Committee with answers to the following questions:

1. How many travel trailers did Gulf Stream manufacture specifically for FEMA following the Gulf Coast hurricanes of 2005? What were the terms of the contract for the purchase of these travel trailers?
2. Was formaldehyde used in the production of the Gulf Stream travel trailers sold to FEMA following the Gulf Coast hurricanes of 2005? If so, how was formaldehyde used in the production of the travel trailers?
3. Why would a Gulf Stream travel trailer sold to FEMA following the Gulf Coast hurricanes of 2005 have high levels of formaldehyde?
4. What processes, if any, does Gulf Stream use to decrease or minimize the levels of formaldehyde in the travel trailers it produces? Were these processes used for the travel trailers sold to FEMA?
5. For the travel trailers sold to FEMA, did Gulf Stream voluntarily follow the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's formaldehyde emission controls standard for wood products for manufactured homes?
6. Did Gulf Stream test the formaldehyde emissions of any travel trailer components or parts? If so, what were the results of these tests?

Mr. Brian Shea  
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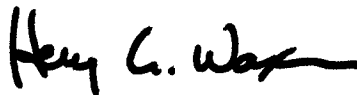
7. Were subcontractors used in the production of the travel trailers or manufactured homes sold to FEMA following the Gulf Coast hurricanes of 2005? If so, which companies were used as subcontractors and what component or part did each subcontractor manufacture? Was formaldehyde used in the manufacture of these components or parts? If so, which components or parts?
8. What actions has Gulf Stream taken in light of the elevated formaldehyde levels found in the travel trailers FEMA provided to Gulf Coast hurricane victims?

Please provide the Committee with the requested documents and answers by Friday, March 7, 2008.

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the principal oversight committee in the House of Representatives and has broad oversight jurisdiction as set forth in House Rule X. An attachment to this letter provides additional information about how to respond to the Committee's request.

If you have any questions, please contact Erik Jones with the Committee staff at (202) 225-4407.

Sincerely,



Henry A. Waxman  
Chairman

Enclosure

cc: Tom Davis  
Ranking Minority Member

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## **Responding to Oversight Committee Document Requests**

In responding to the document request from the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, please apply the instructions and definitions set forth below.

### **Instructions**

1. In complying with the request, you should produce all responsive documents in your possession, custody, or control.
2. Documents responsive to the request should not be destroyed, modified, removed, transferred, or otherwise made inaccessible to the Committee.
3. In the event that any entity, organization, or individual denoted in the request has been, or is currently, known by any other name than that herein denoted, the request should be read also to include them under that alternative identification.
4. Each document produced should be produced in a form that renders the document capable of being copied.
5. When you produce documents, you should identify the paragraph or clause in the Committee's request to which the documents respond.
6. Documents produced in response to this request should be produced together with copies of file labels, dividers, or identifying markers with which they were associated when this request was issued. To the extent that documents were not stored with file labels, dividers, or identifying markers, they should be organized into separate folders by subject matter prior to production.
7. Each folder and box should be numbered, and a description of the contents of each folder and box, including the paragraph or clause of the request to which the documents are responsive, should be provided in an accompanying index.
8. It is not a proper basis to refuse to produce a document that any other person or entity also possesses a nonidentical or identical copy of the same document.

9. If any of the requested information is available in machine-readable or electronic form (such as on a computer server, hard drive, CD, DVD, memory stick, or computer backup tape), you should consult with Committee staff to determine the appropriate format in which to produce the information.
10. The Committee accepts electronic documents in lieu of paper productions. Documents produced in electronic format should be organized, identified, and indexed electronically in a manner comparable to the organizational structure called for in (6) and (7) above. Electronic document productions should be prepared according to the following standards:
  - (a) The production should consist of single page TIF files accompanied by a Concordance-format load file, an Opticon reference file, and a file defining the fields and character lengths of the load file.
  - (b) Document numbers in the load file should match document Bates Numbers and TIF file names.
  - (c) If the production is completed through a series of multiple partial productions, field names and file order in all load files should match.
11. In the event that a responsive document is withheld on any basis, you should provide the following information concerning the document: (a) the reason the document is not being produced; (b) the type of document; (c) the general subject matter; (d) the date, author, and addressee; and (e) the relationship of the author and addressee to each other.
12. If any document responsive to this request was, but no longer is, in your possession, custody, or control, you should identify the document (stating its date, author, subject, and recipients) and explain the circumstances by which the document ceased to be in your possession, custody, or control.
13. If a date or other descriptive detail set forth in this request referring to a document is inaccurate, but the actual date or other descriptive detail is known to you or is otherwise apparent from the context of the request, you should produce all documents which would be responsive as if the date or other descriptive detail were correct.
14. This request is continuing in nature and applies to any newly discovered document. Any document not produced because it has not been located or discovered by the return date should be produced immediately upon location or discovery subsequent thereto.
15. All documents should be bates-stamped sequentially and produced sequentially. In the cover letter, you should include a total page count for the entire production, including both hard copy and electronic documents.

16. Two sets of documents should be delivered, one set to the majority staff and one set to the minority staff. The majority set should be delivered to the majority staff in Room 2157 of the Rayburn House Office Building, and the minority set should be delivered to the minority staff in Room B350A in the Rayburn House Office Building. You should consult with committee staff regarding the method of delivery prior to sending any materials.
17. Upon completion of the document production, you should submit a written certification, signed by you or your counsel, stating that (1) a diligent search has been completed of all documents in your possession, custody, or control which reasonably could contain responsive documents; and (2) all documents located during the search that are responsive have been produced to the Committee or identified in a privilege log provided to the Committee.

## **Definitions**

1. The term “document” means any written, recorded, or graphic matter of any nature whatsoever, regardless of how recorded, and whether original or copy, including, but not limited to, the following: memoranda, reports, expense reports, books, manuals, instructions, financial reports, working papers, records, notes, letters, notices, confirmations, telegrams, receipts, appraisals, pamphlets, magazines, newspapers, prospectuses, interoffice and intra-office communications, electronic mail (email), contracts, cables, notations of any type of conversation, telephone calls, meetings or other communications, bulletins, printed matter, computer printouts, teletypes, invoices, transcripts, diaries, analyses, returns, summaries, minutes, bills, accounts, estimates, projections, comparisons, messages, correspondence, press releases, circulars, financial statements, reviews, opinions, offers, studies and investigations, questionnaires and surveys, and work sheets (and all drafts, preliminary versions, alterations, modifications, revisions, changes, and amendments of any of the foregoing, as well as any attachments or appendices thereto). The term also means any graphic or oral records or representations of any kind (including without limitation, photographs, charts, graphs, voice mails, microfiche, microfilm, videotape, recordings and motion pictures), electronic and mechanical records or representations of any kind (including, without limitation, tapes, cassettes, disks, computer server files, computer hard drive files, CDs, DVDs, memory sticks, and recordings), and other written, printed, typed, or other graphic or recorded matter of any kind or nature, however produced or reproduced, and whether preserved in writing, film, tape, disk videotape or otherwise. A document bearing any notation not a part of the original text is to be considered a separate document. A draft or non-identical copy is a separate document within the meaning of this term.
2. The term “documents in your possession, custody, or control” means (a) documents that are in your possession, custody, or control, whether held by you or your past or present agents, employees, or representatives acting on your behalf; (b) documents that you have a legal right to obtain, that you have a right to copy, or to which you have access and (c) documents that you have placed in the temporary possession, custody, or control of any third party.
3. The term “communication” means each manner of means of disclosure or exchange of information, regardless of means utilized, where oral, electronic by document or otherwise, and whether fact-to-face, in a meeting, by telephone, mail, telexes, discussions, releases, personal delivery, or otherwise.
4. The terms “and” and “or” shall be construed broadly and either conjunctively or disjunctively to bring within the scope of the request any information which might otherwise be construed to be outside its scope. The singular includes plural number, and vice versa. The masculine includes the feminine and neuter genders.
5. The terms “person” or “persons” means natural persons, firms, partnerships, associations, corporations, subsidiaries, division, departments, joint ventures,

proprietorships, syndicates, or other legal, business or government entities, and all subsidiaries, affiliates, divisions, departments, branches, and other units thereof.

6. The terms “referring” or “relating,” with respect to any given subject, means anything that constitutes, contains, embodies, reflects, identifies, states, refers to, deals with, or is in any manner whatsoever pertinent to that subject.