



# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 109<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 151

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, JANUARY 6, 2005

No. 2

## Senate

### Statement of Senator Dianne Feinstein

#### *“In Support of the Victims of the Earthquake and Tsunami in Asia”*

Mrs. FEINSTEIN: Mr. President, I rise today to express my support for the resolution introduced this week by Senator Frist and Senator Reid expressing sympathy and support for the victims of the devastating earthquake and tsunami.

Words cannot begin to describe my emotions when I first learned of the scope of the disaster and the loss of life. More than 140,000 people from 12 nations have perished to date and the number could double or triple as a result of infectious diseases spread in the disaster's aftermath.

The victims, their families, and all the affected countries are truly in my thoughts and prayers. When I visit the Indonesian Embassy this week to sign the condolence book, I will do so with a heavy heart but also a commitment to ensure that we do everything in our power to help in the rescue, recovery, and reconstruction efforts.

I welcome the President's commitment to provide \$350 million in relief and as a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee and I stand ready to do my part to designate a robust and comprehensive aid package. Initially, we must provide emergency supplies such as water, sanitation, food, and shelter to prevent the spread of disease and give people hope.

There is little time to lose.

Yet our work and our commitment must not end there. Together with our friends and allies in the international community, the United Nations, and

vital organizations such as the Red Cross we will develop a long term relief and reconstruction plan with substantial funding. Too often when a disaster leaves the headlines and the top of the news broadcasts, we forget that the work has only just begun and the victims and their families need to know that we are with them for the long haul.

Indeed, this is an important opportunity to show the world the best of America and the American people.

Americans have already donated more than \$100 million through nongovernmental organizations to support relief efforts and thousands more stand ready to volunteer their time, energy, and skills.

And I am confident that President George H.W. Bush and President Bill Clinton will do an excellent job in leading a nationwide charitable fundraising effort to sustain awareness about the disaster and raise additional assistance.

We are a generous, giving, and caring people and through our actions we will earn the world's respect and admiration. We will show the victims and their families that America is always ready to help a neighbor and a friend in need.

I am pleased the resolution was passed by Unanimous Consent.