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**U.S. SENATOR JOHN CORNYN INTRODUCES  
LEGISLATION TO PROTECT VOLUNTEERS, INCLUDING THOSE  
ASSISTING VICTIMS OF HURRICANES KATRINA AND RITA**

**The Bill Highlights Congress’s Proper Role In Setting Limits  
On Litigation In Specific Circumstances**

WASHINGTON, DC – September 29, 2005 – Common Good, the bipartisan legal reform coalition, announced today that Senator John Cornyn (R-TX) has introduced legislation in the U.S. Senate that offers a comprehensive solution to the fear of litigation that unnecessarily burdens volunteers and often prevents the provision of necessary goods and services to victims of national disasters and to all those in need. Known as *The Good Samaritan Liability Improvement and Volunteer Encouragement Act of 2005*, or *GIVE Act*, the bill will provide protection to volunteers across the nation, particularly those working in response to national disasters such as 9/11 or Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Specifically, the GIVE Act will provide that:

- Disaster relief volunteers, generally, are not liable for harm caused in carrying out their volunteer activities in connection with disaster relief unless their act or omission constitutes willful, knowing or reckless misconduct;
- Medical and other professionals can volunteer their services for disaster relief services based on being licensed in their home state regardless of where the declared disaster occurred;
- Non-profit organizations are not liable for the acts or omissions of their volunteers unless the organization has willfully disregarded or is recklessly indifferent to the safety of the individual harmed;
- All donors of goods or equipment – whether businesses, non-profits, or individuals – are not liable for harm caused by donating those items unless they acted with willful, knowing or reckless misconduct.

“Senator Cornyn’s legislation is vitally important in two respects: it protects volunteerism, which is fundamental to the American spirit, and it underscores the crucial role that Congress plays in determining who can sue for what,” said Philip K. Howard, Chair of Common Good. “A healthy society should encourage people to volunteer, not drive them away with fear of litigation.”

Sen. Cornyn is a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee. He previously served as Attorney General of Texas and as a Texas Supreme Court justice. Sens. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX), Trent Lott (R-MS), David Vitter (R-LA), Charles Grassley (R-IA), and John Thune (R-SD) are all original co-sponsors of the GIVE Act.

A copy of the bill is available on Common Good's web site at [www.cgood.org](http://www.cgood.org). For further information, contact Danielle Rhoades at (212) 576-2700 or visit [www.cgood.org](http://www.cgood.org).

*Common Good is a bi-partisan legal reform coalition dedicated to restoring common sense to American law. Its board is composed of leaders in a wide range of fields: former government officials, including Howard Baker, Bill Bradley, Griffin Bell, Newt Gingrich, Eric Holder, George McGovern, Diane Ravitch, Alan Simpson, and Richard Thornburgh; current and former university presidents, including Tom Kean, George Rupp, and John Silber, and numerous other leaders in education, health care, law, business and public policy. The Chair of Common Good is Philip K. Howard, a lawyer and author of The Death of Common Sense and The Collapse of the Common Good.*