

ATTACHMENT G – ADVANCE LETTER FOR CASE STUDY SITES

Date

FBCO Contact Name

Contact Title

Name of FBCO

Street Address

City, State Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Contact Name:

The Urban Institute has been contracted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to conduct a study of the role of faith-based and community organizations in the human services relief efforts after hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. We have selected your organization as an interesting example of how these important services were provided and would like to visit you in the near future to learn more about these activities.

Faith-based and community organizations (FBCOs) have been a critical component of the post-Katrina relief and recovery efforts in the Gulf Coast region. However, systematic information on their level of effort, types of services, networks used to provide services, and relationships with government agencies, is very sparse. Through our study, we have surveyed a random sample of FBCOs in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Houston to measure the number and types of activities that were conducted and the types of networks used to provide relief services in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. Currently, we are planning to visit 8-10 organizations like yours in the region to examine their experiences, successes, and challenges in serving hurricane victims.

Should you agree to allow us to visit you and your organization, we would plan to come to your location for 2 to 2½ days, depending on the number of staff to interview, the number of partners, affiliates and public officials you interacted with, and the possibility of holding a focus group with recipients of your relief services. The Urban Institute would send two staff members to conduct the interviews, using semi-structured discussion guides. While we would ask for your guidance in determining who to interview and how to schedule our visit, our team will organize and set up the interview times with the individuals selected. We will do our best to be as flexible as possible as we know you would need to take time out of your busy schedule to work with us.

We do want to note two things before you make your decision to allow us to visit your organization. This is not a government audit or investigation, nor a formal evaluation of what you did during and after the storm. We are visiting to gain a better understanding of your experiences in delivering services to those who needed them after the 2005 hurricanes. The information will be used to produce reports and other materials for use by a broad audience, but especially by HHS officials, to develop strategies to work with FBCOs during and after disasters and other emergencies. In addition, we will not attribute any information an individual provides by name in these reports as all information will be synthesized by case study, so the information provided will be kept private within the limits of the law.

A member of the Urban Institute project team will be calling you in the next week to determine your interest in participating in this study. Should you have any questions before we contact you, please feel free to call me at 202-261-5399 or email me at fkramer@ui.urban.org.

Sincerely,

Fredrica Kramer

Co-Principal Investigator