



## **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE AGENCIES FOR SURPLUS PROPERTY**

### **D/b/a NASASP, Inc.**

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### **Federal Government Disposal Policies for Travel Trailers and Mobile Homes Continue the Mismanagement of Katrina Assets.**

### **NASASP, Inc Calls on Congress For An Immediate Halt to Failed Policies**

#### **NASASP**

Members of NASASP, Inc. (NASASP) are the State Agencies for Surplus Property (SASPs) of the 50 States, U.S. Territories, and the District of Columbia. We represent 67,000 donee organizations including villages, towns and townships, counties, 8(a) businesses, public educational institutions, public health agencies, public safety (police and fire), libraries, not-for-profit organizations including private schools, veteran's homes, senior centers, homeless shelters, food banks, and other eligible recipients as determined by Federal law. Our Agencies ensure fair and equitable distribution of Federal surplus property. All recipients of the donated property are held accountable under Federal and State statutes. We network across the country and the world with our donee organizations through a system of communications, warehousing and transportation. We serve the neediest of America's organizations.

The United States Congress fulfills its responsibility under the United States Constitution to “make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory or other property of the United States.” In the exercise of this authority, Congress has passed laws about property designed to serve the best interests of the citizens. These laws are based on the premise that the public is the actual owner of Government property and Federal agencies that hold and utilize such property are merely custodians of it. Consequently, personal property management laws require Federal agencies to transfer excess personal property to other Federal agencies as the highest utilization of such property. When no Federal need is expressed, the next highest priority is to transfer the property and continue its public use through the SASPs. This system has served the public well for many years, allowing the property to continue to serve the public throughout its useful life.

## **FEMA Travel Trailers and Mobile Homes Equal Tax Payer Assets**

Recently the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) at the request of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), placed over 100,00 units of tax-payer property in the form of travel trailers and mobile homes onto their auction site known as GSA Auctions. These units were first constructed for use on the Gulf Coast of the United States after the hurricane disaster known as Katrina and subsequently the hurricane disaster known as Rita. Hundreds of thousands of units were constructed in a short time frame and sent to the Gulf Coast. Still hundreds of thousands more were staged for use around the United States in case of further need.

Following the aftermath of Katrina and Rita hundreds of unused travel trailers and mobile homes were sold for FEMA by GSA using GSA Auctions. In December 2005 a meeting was held at Fort Belvoir, Virginia between representatives of NASASP, GSA, the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service (DRMS) and FEMA. It was at this meeting that NASASP presented their plan to ask for donations of surplus travel trailers and mobile homes and how they would be used by our local communities prolonging the life and public use of these items for the U.S. Taxpayers.

Since that meeting over 6500 travel trailers and mobile homes have been provided back to the taxpayers who paid for them in the first place in accordance with the scope of the Federal Surplus Property Program. The most important accomplishment of placing these units was a realization of over \$80 million in savings to the American Taxpayer. Federal agencies also saved the American Taxpayer millions of dollars by the reutilization of many of the FEMA units. FEMA took away the ability of the Federal agencies to further save Taxpayer money when they choose to sell these large quantities through the use of the Exchange Sale Authority. NASASP believes that the Congressionally approved Federal Surplus Donation Program is the best option if these items are not needed for Federal agency use. We are asking Congress therefore to stop the mass selling of these items to the public at large for the following reasons:

- NASASP serves the neediest of organizations in the United States
- During times of disaster whether natural or man-made, before, during and after, we network with all states and territories to provide assistance. Having these assets on the ground in our states and local communities would negate the immediate need to wait for Federal assistance. In a matter of minutes or hours help would be on the way.
- Warehousing. Many SASPs have warehouses where these assets would be safe and in good care if not immediately moved to our donees. In addition our warehouses can and have been used for storage of other emergency care items for all types of disasters.
- Accountability. All SASPs are accountable to not only the Federal government but also our State governments. We track where the property is donated for no less then 18 months including random periodic visits made to many of the donees to spot check their use.
- Health and human services. Most SASPs already inspect all travel trailers and mobile homes upon donation, many SASPs have purchased testing equipment on their own to stay ahead of even Federal requirements.
- Loss of these units would cause economic hardship to many of our donees, including public agencies, non-profit organizations and small minority businesses. Just as the economy starts to rebound flooding the market would cost revenues and jobs in many of our communities across the United States.

- Quantity. The SASPs require only a small amount of the total of over 100,000 available units, perhaps less than 5%. Since 2006 we have screened available units, taken what was needed for donation and then the Federal government has sold the remainder to the public at large. NASASP would favor an immediate return to this policy.

## **SUMMARY**

We know that the potential for acquiring these units was a tremendous opportunity for our states and local communities during these times of economic distress, devastating natural disasters, pandemic health issues, home land security concerns and failing infrastructure in the United States. Previous donations of the travel trailers and mobile homes have been used to address all of these concerns. We know with over 63 years of experience that there is value to the excess and surplus trailers that were staged all across this country. We also know through our experience about many times when American Taxpayer property has been left as scrap or sold for just pennies on the dollar like these travel trailers and mobile homes are now.

Although we have been doing the real work for over four years and asking the questions the Federal government has not provided us with the service and answers we need to continue to realize the fruition of our plans. Indeed they have changed policies over the past four years time and again..

NASASP is ready and able to set in motion again our system of selecting and transporting these units back to our local communities but we need the assistance from the Federal government. We also need Congress to be informed of our concerns and the real possibility of failure without support. NASASP is willing to be a full partner in this venture offering our services of warehousing, networking, transportation and most importantly accountability to America to take advantage of this opportunity.

NASASP also requests that we be invited to testify at any and all hearings on this matter, as well as on any matter affecting the personal property disposal process. As the sole conduit for placing Federal surplus personal property back into the hands of the American Taxpayers for over 63 years, we are singularly well qualified to offer testimony on this subject.

We will end by signing off with the motto of NASASP, Inc for all of of our 63 years and ask again that **Congress take immediate steps to stop this waste of taxpayer dollars and poor public policy.**

“Pro Bono Publico”

“For the Good of the public”