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**NEWS RELEASE**

# Judd Gregg

United States Senator for New Hampshire  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

*Monday, May 12, 2003*

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## **GREGG SAYS ‘TOPOFF II TERRORISM EXERCISE WILL BUILD OFF INITIAL MOCK ATTACK WORK AND BETTER PREPARE NATION’**

*Senator directed Justice Dept to stage mock terrorist acts in 1998 legislation*

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Judd Gregg, Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, State and the Judiciary, will visit the TOPOFF II Master Control Cell tomorrow in Washington, DC, to witness improvements that have been made since the mock terrorist attacks of TOPOFF I occurred 3 years ago. In 1998, Senator Gregg directed the Justice Department to use funding he set aside in the CJSJ appropriations bill to stage mock terrorist attacks in three cities around the nation, including in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

TOPOFF II is a Congressionally-mandated national combating terrorism exercise series, sponsored by the Office of Domestic Preparedness, transferred from the Justice Department to the Department of Homeland Security, and the Department of State. The TOPOFF II exercises are designed to provide training for federal, state and local top officials and responders and to demonstrated coordinated national crisis and consequence management capabilities in response to an incidents involving weapons of mass destruction. The events starting today, occurring in Seattle, Washington and Chicago, Illinois, begin a week of drills to test the ability of local, state and federal officials to effectively respond to attacks and work together.

Senator Gregg stated, “We started these exercises with the implicit purpose of ensuring that our first response officials on the local, state and federal level could work together immediately and without turf battles, to effectively and efficiently respond to a terrorist attack. Clearly, the exercises that will be conducted around the nation this week are done with a new sense of urgency and understanding in our post-9/11 world about what a tragic and horrific result terrorist attacks wreak on all of our lives.

“In the immediate moments of September 11, we witnessed an outstanding response by first responders in New York City and at the Pentagon, who acted on impulse with a tremendous strength and resolution. This second round of exercises is crucial to building on the skills and procedures that our first responders have to ensure the fastest and best possible response to any attacks on our nation.”

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Senator Gregg will tour the Master Control Cell, which is the central location of all exercise coordination. Senator Gregg will observe the constant communication with the venues

nationwide and federal interagency coordination and response, including what occurs when a threat condition changes from orange to red and the response by officials.

The exercises in 2000 were designed to test and prepare top officials (TOPOFF) for the consequences surrounding an actual chemical, biological, radiological and/or cyber-weapons attack. TOPOFF I was comprised of three smaller exercises testing officials in the New Hampshire Seacoast region, state officials and the federal government. By analyzing the quality and efficiency of the first-response crisis management skills displayed in Portsmouth, officials were able to provide local personnel with valuable information designed to improve response scenarios for situations involving weapons of mass destruction.

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