

News from Congressman David Price (NC-04)

Chairman, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security

Tuesday, April 1, 2008

Media Contact: Paul Cox, 202-225-1784

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OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN DAVID PRICE *Infrastructure Protection and Cyber Security Hearing, 2 pm*

Today we will be discussing the Department's approach to protecting our nation's critical infrastructure, physical assets, such as ports, chemical plants, and nuclear facilities, as well as the servers and computer networks that make up the cyber infrastructure upon which our society increasingly relies. Given the vast diversity of our nation's key assets, more than 80 percent of which are privately owned, the National Protection and Programs Directorate, or NPPD, uses a broad range of programs, relationships and authorities to protect against attacks on our nation's infrastructure, and reduce the impact of any catastrophes that may occur. While NPPD's budget also includes the US-VISIT program, we have already had a US-VISIT hearing. In this hearing, we focus on the infrastructure protection, cyber security, and emergency communications responsibilities that round out NPPD's portfolio.

Our witnesses today are Robert Jamison, the Undersecretary for the National Protection and Programs Division, Robert Stephan, the Assistant Secretary for Infrastructure Protection, and Gregory Garcia, the Assistant Secretary for Cyber Security and Communications. Gentlemen, welcome, and thank you all for being here today.

Excluding funds for the US-VISIT program, which is part of NPPD but has no direct impact on the security of the nation's infrastructure, the 2009 budget for the agency is \$895.8 million, an increase of \$193.7 million over the 2008 enacted level. Since this increase includes a \$34.5 million transfer of the LORAN radio navigation system from the Coast Guard budget to NPPD, the net budgetary growth at NPPD is roughly \$160 million over 2008, a 23% increase.

Nearly all of this proposed increase goes to two programs in the Cyber Security and Communications division. The budget proposes that the National Security and Emergency Preparedness Telecommunications program grow by more than \$100 million, or 74 percent, over the 2008 enacted level. The funding for the Administration's cyber security initiative increases by more than \$83 million in the 2009 budget, or 39 percent over the 2008 enacted levels, to nearly \$300 million for the year. This is on top of a 2008 appropriation that was already 128 percent more than had been provided in 2007, meaning that Cyber Security funds in 2009 will be more than triple the level just two years before.

These increases for Cyber Security and Communications are all the more notable because the budget proposes that overall spending at the Department grow by less than 1 percent in 2009. We need a thorough understanding of why these programs merit the large increases that have been proposed, and look forward to discussing that today.

The budget for Infrastructure Protection does not fare nearly as well as Cyber Security and Communications, increasing by only \$204,000, or less than one-tenth of one percent, to a total funding level of \$272.8 million. I have serious concerns about whether such austerity is merited for Infrastructure Protection. This division has important responsibilities for securing the nation's chemical facilities, managing relationships with participants in the National Infrastructure Protection Plan, and modeling the consequences of disasters, both natural and man-made, so that emergency managers can better develop response plans and policies. As part of the 2008 Appropriations Act, Infrastructure Protection also received significant new authority to regulate the chemical Ammonium Nitrate. I would like to know whether this budget is adequate for managing the current Infrastructure Protection workload while also implementing these new regulatory responsibilities.

I am also interested in work being done at NPPD's consolidated Risk Management and Analysis office, which has responsibility for coordinating DHS-wide risk policy and developing a consistent risk analysis framework for the entire Department. We have heard from many outside witnesses about the importance of risk analysis both to inform resource allocation and measure programmatic results. I am eager to hear about the progress this office is making and the plans for it in 2009.

Undersecretary Jamison, I would also like to discuss your goals for NPPD over the coming year. As we all know, NPPD is the latest product of several programmatic reorganizations carried out since the creation of DHS. Whoever takes charge in 2009 needs to be able to rely on NPPD to help protect the country's vast infrastructure, and we need to make sure that on January 21, 2009, the next President will have a highly functional organization helping protect our country.

We all have your written statement, Undersecretary Jamison, so I will ask you to summarize your testimony in a five minute statement, so that we have adequate time for discussing members' questions. Before that, however, let me turn to Ranking Member Rogers for his remarks.

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