



COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

David Price (D-NC), Chairman, Subcommittee on Homeland Security

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OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN DAVID PRICE

Subcommittee Mark-up of the FY 2011 Homeland Security Appropriations Act

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I am pleased today to present the 2011 Homeland Security Appropriations bill. The bill reflects an extended period of information-gathering and analysis: the Subcommittee conducted hearings involving nearly every component and agency within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). We also tackled issues that affect the entire Department, such as DHS procurement and contracting strategies and Southwest Border security. Drawing on our investigation and analysis, this 2011 mark offers the resources and direction the Department of Homeland Security needs for the coming fiscal year.

Importantly, this bill reflects the tradition of bipartisan cooperation on our Subcommittee. I want to thank the distinguished Ranking Member for his valuable input, which has resulted in a better bill. Hal and his staff worked cooperatively with us, and we have included many of their suggestions in the mark. While we may not agree on every item, I think we can agree that this bill responsibly funds the important missions of the Department while requiring strict accountability from DHS officials, and therefore is a product I believe every Member can and should get behind.

Within the past year, our nation has witnessed a substantial increase in attempts to attack our country, both by home-grown terrorists and individuals from outside our borders. While the Christmas Day and Times Square bombing attempts are the most visible of these thwarted disasters, DHS figures show how "the number and pace of attempted attacks against the United States over the past nine months have surpassed the number of attempts during any other previous one-year period". If nothing else, this heightened threat environment provides the clearest justification for the bill's \$43.89 billion in discretionary funding, which is \$1.1 billion, or 2.6 percent, above the comparable fiscal year 2010 amount. For brevity's sake, let me summarize the bill's highlights:

To respond to the continued and evolving threat to our aviation sector, the bill grows the Transportation Security Administration budget by six percent, by far the largest increase for any agency within DHS. This includes funding for several key initiatives that the Administration has proposed: the bill fully funds 503 advanced imaging technology units to better detect items concealed on travelers' persons; provides for hiring 5,355 new screeners to operate this new equipment; funds acquisition of portable trace detection machines to uncover microscopic explosive residues; supports 275 additional canine teams to sniff out explosives at checkpoints; increases the presence of federal air marshals on both domestic and international flights; and strengthens both the intelligence and international aviation security programs within TSA.

The December 25th and Times Square bombing attempts highlighted critical deficiencies in the management and sharing of intelligence information and terrorist watchlists. This bill aggressively addresses these deficiencies both overseas and domestically. For example:

- We provide \$85 million for Secure Flight to ensure watchlist checking will be done solely by the government, rather than the airlines;

- We add \$7 million to enhance targeting systems and the capacity of the National Targeting Center to deal with expanded passenger and cargo screening;
- We restore funding for the Global Advance Passenger Information/Passenger Name Record initiative to help key foreign partners gain control over who enters and leaves their countries, further hindering terrorist travel;
- We fund \$37 million for Immigration and Customs Enforcement's Visa Security Units, a front line program that thwarts those who seek to exploit our legitimate visa process. With this funding, ICE will open up four new overseas locations in countries with the highest threat of terrorist travel.

Consistent with our actions last year, the Committee targets resources to address the most pressing border threats and challenges while preserving the legitimate movement of people and goods through ports of entry. The Subcommittee funds the full cost of 20,370 Border Patrol agents, of whom more than 17,000 are based along the Southwest Border – an increase of more than 50 percent since 2006. We also fund the requested increase of nearly \$45 million for an additional 389 CBP Officers and mission support staff. Finally, the Subcommittee mark includes \$430 million for further Southwest Border investments in fencing, infrastructure, surveillance technology, and *SBI*net. This reflects a reduction in the *SBI*net portion of this account because the Secretary has suspended any significant new investments in the troubled technology program while the Department completes a comprehensive reassessment of the goals and structure of the program.

The bill also provides \$14 million above the amount provided in fiscal year 2010 for ICE programs that support the Southwest Border Initiative. These funds will expand ICE's efforts to target the cartels, such as the Border Enforcement Security Task Force initiative; Southwest border intelligence analysis; and criminal gang, drug, weapons smuggling and human trafficking investigations.

To prioritize DHS immigration efforts, the bill mandates that \$2.1 billion of the \$5.6 billion ICE budget be used to identify dangerous criminal aliens and prioritize the removal of these individuals once an immigration judge orders them deported. ICE projects this and prior-year investments will result in 80 percent of ICE detention capacity being dedicated to criminals awaiting removal from the country in 2011.

The Subcommittee mark includes \$10.2 billion for the Coast Guard, including overseas contingencies. As we know, the Coast Guard is our nation's premier multi-mission response organization, intercepting smugglers of migrants and illegal drugs one moment and conducting safety inspections or search and rescue efforts the next, all the while serving as first responders on the scene of catastrophes such as the Haiti earthquake and the *Deepwater Horizon* blowout. To ensure that prevention and response capacity remains robust, the bill restores cuts to Coast Guard personnel, rejects the decommissioning of two High Endurance Cutters, and keeps five HH-65 helicopters from being retired. It also provides \$38.5 million above the request to enhance the Coast Guard's oil rig inspection and spill response capacity, and to develop advanced oil spill control and cleanup technologies.

The Subcommittee strengthens our commitment to State and local partners by providing \$4.2 billion in grants, \$151 million above the request. Highlights include \$840 million for Firefighter Assistance grants for training, equipment and staffing of our local fire stations and \$907 million for the Urban Area Security Initiative, which directs security funding to areas most at risk. Additionally the mark provides \$1.95 billion for disaster relief activities, as requested, to continue our commitment to areas of our country struck by disasters while maintaining readiness to respond to future catastrophes.

This is a good bill, and I hope that every member of the Subcommittee will support it. With that, I'd now like to turn to my colleague, the distinguished Ranking Member from Kentucky, for any opening comments he would like to make.

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