



FOR RELEASE: September 19, 2012

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U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

HEARING: "Homeland Threats and Agency Responses"

WASHINGTON – Today, Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.), Member of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and Chairman of the Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services, and International Security, participated in the hearing, "Homeland Threats and Agency Responses."

A copy of his opening statement, as prepared for delivery, follows:

"Last week, as American's were commemorating the 11th Anniversary of 9/11, our nation lost four American heroes, including Ambassador Chris Stevens, who dedicated his life to advancing the ideals of democracy, liberty and justice across the globe. These senseless acts are another stark reminder that the values that make us a great country are still a target across the world and that we must remain ever vigilant to new and evolving threats.

"As the tragic events in Libya and the turmoil across North Africa and the Middle East make clear, our country and people still face a very real threat from terrorism. While we have made important strides in taking out top Al Qaeda leaders, the group's violent anti-American message continues to resonate with many around the world. We must also maintain a clear-eyed assessment of the dangers posed by the nuclear ambitions of Iran. All of these dangers pose real threats not only abroad but here at home too. That is why we must continue to find innovative ways to protect our borders and ports, enhance our aviation and transportation security, and secure our critical infrastructure. However, if a program is not working, we shouldn't just keep throwing good money after bad; we must work smarter across the federal government and look to get better results with our limited resources.

"One threat that continues to grow and, in the words of FBI Director Robert Mueller, may 'equal or surpass the threat of counter terrorism in the foreseeable future' is the threat from hackers, terrorists, and nation states in cyberspace. Every day, hackers are stealing the hard work and innovation of our American companies, putting our economic security at risk. But, it's not just valuable information that we are losing. To put it bluntly, it's also American jobs and our competitive edge. Of course, the same vulnerabilities being exploited to steal our intellectual property can also be used by those who want to do us physical harm. With a few clicks of a mouse, cyber terrorists or nation states could shut

down our electric grid, release dangerous chemicals into the air we breathe, or disrupt our financial markets.

"If we don't become more vigilant – and soon – a sophisticated hacker might just find a way to carry out a cyber 9/11. That is why I joined Chairman Lieberman, Ranking Member Collins and others in introducing the Cybersecurity Act of 2012. The bill takes a number of bold and necessary steps to better secure our critical infrastructure and share cyber threat information and will go a long ways toward bringing our cyber capabilities into the 21st century. Unfortunately, the bill has become mired in partisan politics despite our best efforts to address the concerns of Senators on both sides of the aisle. While I am disappointed that the Senate has not been able to come together and pass a cybersecurity bill, I remain committed to working with my colleagues to pass legislation as soon as possible.

"I would like to thank Secretary Napolitano, Associate Deputy Director Perkins, and Director Olson for being with us today to discuss all of these threats and the steps we are taking to better secure our country. I would also like to thank them for their years of dedicated public service. Your efforts, along with those many others across our government, including the bravery of our armed forces, intelligence community, and diplomatic corps, are why we are a safer nation today. I would also like to recognize all the first responders and law enforcement officials throughout the country who continue to work so hard for our safety and security.

"The challenges before us are vast, but if we can rekindle that spirit of unity that helped us get through those difficult days after 9/11, I know we will be able to overcome any challenge and continue to accomplish great things."