



Committee on
HOMELAND SECURITY
Chairman Peter T. King

Opening Statement

December 7, 2011

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**Statement of Chairman Peter King (R-NY)
House Committee on Homeland Security**

**Joint Hearing with the
Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**

**"Homegrown Terrorism: The Threat to Military Communities Inside
the United States"**

**December 7, 2011
Remarks as Prepared**

Today, the House Committee on Homeland Security and the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee are holding a joint investigative hearing on the homegrown terrorist threat within the military itself and to military communities inside the United States. Let me start by thanking Chairman Lieberman, Ranking Member Collins, and their Committee for their leadership in the Senate on addressing the threats posed by Islamist radicalization, which they began examining five years ago. I appreciate Chairman Lieberman and Ranking Member Collins working with our House Committee on today's hearing, which is the first joint House-Senate homeland security hearing held since the establishment of our House committee in 2005.

I also want to thank our distinguished witnesses for appearing today to discuss this growing security issue including Assistant Secretary of Defense Paul Stockton, and Chief Daris Long, a retired Marine Corps veteran and the father of Army Private William Long, who was killed in a terrorist attack on his recruiting station in Little Rock.

This is the fourth hearing in a series the House Committee has held this year on the serious threat of violent Islamist radicalization within the United States. Our Committee has investigated the problem of radicalization within the Muslim-American community generally, sounded the alarm over radicalization in U.S. prisons, and probed the recruiting and radicalization carried out inside the U.S. by the Al Qaeda-affiliated al-Shabaab group in Somalia.

This joint investigative hearing will seriously examine the emerging and growing danger to our men and women serving in uniform, as reflected by the facts that are known to us.

We had an obligation to act in response to alarming new developments concerning a growing security threat from radicalization both *internally within* the military, as well as *externally* toward military personnel and their families residing in the United States. Our troops volunteer to go into harm's way overseas to protect all of us – they should not be in harm's way here at home, and yet they are.

The dominant threat is from active duty military within the armed forces. This threat is persistent and enduring.

More than five Islamist terror plots have been disrupted involving U.S. military insiders in the past decade and 11 cases involved veterans or those who attempted to join law enforcement and intelligence agencies. The total number of radicalized troops is more than publicly realized or acknowledged.

Since the 9/11 attacks, at least 33 public cases have been prosecuted or probed in which homegrown terrorists living and operating in the United States – and sometimes inside the military itself – posed a grave threat, plotted to carry out attacks or perpetrated violence aimed at America's Armed Forces in the homeland or deployed to overseas warzones. Twenty-three of these military-targeted plots, or 70% of the total, have unfolded since mid-2009 as part of the broader surge of homegrown Islamist terrorism.

Two successful attacks against the military were perpetrated by radicalized soldiers assigned to U.S.-based Army units at Camp Pennsylvania in Kuwait in 2003 and at Fort Hood, Texas, in 2009;

At least 16 external terror plots by jihadis inside the U.S. who were aiming for military personnel stationed in the homeland have been disrupted or investigated;

At least nine other external plots were thwarted involving U.S. Persons in the homeland who traveled or planned trips overseas to kill G.I.s in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere;

A growing number of terrorist threats are directed at families of military personnel. Particularly of concern is the safety of relatives whose loved ones are in units deployed on secret counterterror operations.

As recent history illustrates, the only successful attacks on the homeland resulting in deaths since September 11 have been against the military – at Fort Hood, where 13 were murdered in an active-shooter attack allegedly by Army Major Nidal Hasan, and at a Little Rock recruiting center, where Army Private William Long was fatally shot point-blank by radicalized homegrown Islamist Carlos Bledsoe.

In summary, today's hearing will address the twofold threat from within the military and against the military.

The Fort Hood attack was not an anomaly. It was part of Al Qaeda's two-decade success at infiltrating the U.S. military for terrorism — an effort that is increasing in scope and threat.

Military communities in the U.S. have recently become the most sought-after targets of violent Islamist extremists seeking to kill Americans in their homeland. We cannot stand idly by while our heroes in uniform are struck down in the place they feel safest. The homegrown terrorist threat to military communities inside the United States is of critical significance and one which we simply cannot afford to neglect.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses on these matters.