



Committee on
HOMELAND SECURITY
Chairman Michael McCaul

Opening Statement

April 18, 2013

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**Statement of Chairman Michael McCaul (R-Texas)
Committee on Homeland Security**

“The President’s FY 2014 Budget Request for the Department of Homeland Security”

**April 18, 2013
Remarks as Prepared**

Secretary Napolitano, I want to thank you for being here during this difficult time for our country.

Events like the Boston bombing transcend politics. Today, as we search for answers and remember those who were lost and injured, we are reminded of how vulnerable we are as a free society. We also realize the truths about the core of this country – that we are strong, resilient and committed to continuing our way of life.

In the moments following the explosions, we felt tremendous heartbreak, but also witnessed tremendous acts of heroism. From the first responders who arrived on the scene and undoubtedly saved lives, to the marathoners who ran towards the victims instead of away from the blasts. The courage of the people in this country in the face of great evil inspires us all to not be intimidated – but to instead carry on and to care for each other. The spirit of the people of Boston makes us all proud to be Americans.

The tragic images of that day will stay with us. However, if there is a silver lining in times like these, it is that we as a country become united. After the explosions ceased, I received a call from the White House. It was clear from that conversation that we were not Republicans or Democrats, but we are all Americans who stand together in the fight against terrorism.

And as the nation comes together to embrace the families affected by the tragedy, we recommit ourselves to never returning to a pre-9/11 mentality. We will never forget this heartbreak of losing our own, and we owe them our commitment to never become complacent. While our

intelligence, military and law enforcement are the best in the world, we as citizens must always remain vigilant.

For every event like the one in Boston, many are thwarted. Hearings, like this one today, are meant to improve our prevention of these attacks – and ensure that if they occur, we have the best knowledge and resources to respond.

I want to commend the Department for its involvement in trying to find the terrorists behind this plot. I appreciate the assurances I've received that we are putting the full weight of the federal government behind this search, and I have confidence that we will succeed.

I think I can speak for the committee and tell you that when it comes to Boston, we are all in this together. We are all equally committed to finding who did this and to ensuring they receive swift justice.

As we witnessed this week, this country is still a target for terrorism, and I look forward to discussing how we can best use our resources to combat the many threats against us.

While we may not always agree on the best way to ensure homeland security, today we can all agree that our highest calling is to serve the people, and to ensure their safety.

Today, as we examine the fiscal priorities of the Department, I hope we can identify ways to improve our national security by ensuring DHS agencies work together, and for a common purpose. From securing our borders to ensuring resources aren't wasted – all of the decisions at DHS play a critical role in safeguarding our nation.

I hope that you, Madame Secretary, can discuss the Administration's plans to continue to support DHS's counterterrorism and disaster preparedness and response efforts in addition to the many other issues facing the Department.

The Department was created out of the combination of 22 independent agencies after 9/11, therefore it has had great challenges from its inception. I hope that this hearing, ten years after the creation of DHS, can be a constructive forum, and I look forward to the Secretary's assessment of the Department's proposed budget today.

Finally, I want to add my concern about what happened in West, Texas, yesterday evening. As you know – these types of explosions are extremely hard to contain – and we know that there were many injured. If you have anything you can share with us today on those events and what's being done now, we would all appreciate your insight.

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