



Committee on **HOMELAND SECURITY** Chairman Michael McCaul

Opening Statement

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

Markup of H.R. 4007, H.R. 4228, and H.R. 3283

I would like to thank everyone for their help in advancing the legislation before us today. In addition to being good policy, all three of the bipartisan measures being considered today enjoy support wide stakeholder support and were passed unanimously out of their respective subcommittees.

The first bill being considered today is H.R. 4007, the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards (CFATS) Authorization and Accountability Act, introduced by Chairman Meehan and myself. This bill provides the stability and certainty both the Department and industry have been calling for, while also making fundamental improvements to the CFATS program. It is no secret that CFATS has had a troubled history, but H.R. 4007 will allow the Department to build off its successes while correcting many of its shortcomings.

Specifically, the bill ensures that DHS coordinates with other Federal agencies, state and local officials, and industry associations to make sure facilities aren't off the grid, and ensure First Responders are properly trained to deal with emergency incidents at CFATS facilities. It also improves the site security plan approval and DHS accountability by requiring the Secretary to certify the Department's progress and by authorizing GAO to regularly conduct assessments and report to Congress.

The second bill we will consider today is H.R. 4228, the DHS Acquisition Accountability and Efficiency Act. Since its inception, DHS has faced significant management challenges and the Government Accountability Office continues to include DHS management on its "High Risk List" of areas vulnerable to waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement. In fact, a GAO report released just yesterday shows that despite some progress, increased accountability for DHS acquisition programs is needed. While I'm encouraged by a recent memo from Secretary

Johnson to his DHS leadership team calling for greater collaboration and accountability, more work is still needed.

H.R. 4228 safeguards taxpayer dollars, increases accountability for DHS's big-ticket acquisition purchases and takes important steps to improve communication with industry to ensure DHS is fully leveraging the private sector to protect the homeland.

Today we are also considering H.R. 3283, the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) Modernization Act. Because effective communication with the public before, during, and after a disaster can mean the difference between life and death, the U.S. Government has had a system in place since the 1950's to ensure that citizens can be warned in times of crisis.

This system can also be used by local authorities to warn citizens of an act of terrorism, as it was after the Boston Bombings, or during severe weather. This bill also modernizes the public alert and warning system by incorporating a variety of communications technologies, such as smart phones and social media sites.

Finally, as we discuss improving our emergency response systems, I would like to acknowledge those who are suffering from the severe weather outbreak that has been impacting millions of Americans across America over the past few days. This bad weather has wreaked havoc in many states including Mississippi, in areas represented by Ranking Member Thompson. My prayers and thoughts go out to those that are suffering and I urge those still being impacted to be safe and vigilant.

Again, I would like to thank everyone for their work on these important bills.

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