



Committee on  
**HOMELAND SECURITY**  
Chairman Michael McCaul

*Opening Statement*

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**Statement of Subcommittee Chairman Susan Brooks (R-IN)  
Subcommittee on Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Communications  
Committee on Homeland Security**

**“Mass Gathering Security: A Look at the Coordinated Approach to Super Bowl XLVIII in New Jersey and Other Large Scale Events”**

**Remarks as Prepared**

As the world looks on as millions gather in Brazil to watch the World Cup, the Subcommittee is meeting today to examine the security considerations necessary for mass gatherings.

On February 2, 2014, Super Bowl 48 took place less than ten miles from where we are sitting today. That event, which was attended by more than 80,000 and watched around the world by more than 100 million people, is just one of the many large sporting events and gatherings that take place around the country each year.

My home state of Indiana, and Indianapolis, are very accustomed to hosting large events. Year after year, we welcome hundreds of thousands of visitors who attend conventions, sporting events, festivals, and other mass gathering events. Events such as the Indianapolis 500, and Big 10 Championship games - all with hundreds of thousands of attendees - occur annually. Additionally, Indianapolis has hosted multiple NCAA Final Four Championships and, in 2012, Super Bowl XLVI. During the events leading up to Super Bowl 46, Indianapolis catered to nearly 1.1 million visitors in the Super Bowl Village.

Indianapolis is also home to the largest capacity sports venue in the world, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. This venue has a seating capacity of more than 250,000 spectators. However, during its largest event, the Indianapolis 500, held every Memorial Day, the Speedway regularly has race-day attendance of approximately 300,000 spectators.

To be successful, as was Super Bowl 48 and the recently held Indianapolis 500, each of these events take years of planning and coordination between officials at all levels of government and with their

private sector partners. Because of the nature of these events, a significant amount of time and money needs to be spent on security and planning for every eventuality.

In my home state of Indiana, we experienced a tragedy at the 2011 Indiana State Fair when a stage collapsed before a large concert, resulting in the tragic loss of seven lives and requiring a significant emergency response.

And sadly, twice over the last year, we were again reminded of what is at stake at events of this magnitude. On Monday, April 15, 2013, at roughly 2:50 PM, two explosive devices detonated near the finish line of the Boston Marathon. The attack resulted in 3 deaths and approximately 260 injuries. The improvised explosive devices (IEDs) used in this attack were made from pressure cookers, toy car parts, and gunpowder taken from fireworks. Although a tragic event, the response in the aftermath of the bombings proved that the coordination and planning that took place surrounding the event was a success.

Additionally, just a few days before the Super Bowl a suspicious powder was mailed to several locations in New Jersey and New York, including hotels near the Super Bowl site. Thankfully, the substances were non-toxic, but the situation served as a reminder of the threats we face and the importance of planning, training, and exercises prior to these mass gathering events.

One of the keys to success is thorough planning and coordination between all of those involved. This includes those at the federal, state, local and private sector, all working in a coordinated fashion. It involves intelligence personnel, first responders, security experts and dozens of others playing their part.

In preparation for Super Bowl XLVIII, DHS took the lead in coordinating federal efforts to assist the New Jersey State Police in security operations at MetLife Stadium and the surrounding areas, directing over 13 federal offices and agencies in a massive interagency partnership. This partnership included the FBI, Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), FDA, and DoD, among others, all of which were essential in providing safety and security for travel to and from the stadium and security during the event.

I am pleased that we are joined by a number of key stakeholders in those planning efforts today. Each of our witnesses has played a vital role in ensuring the safety and security of the public when they attend mass gatherings. I look forward to hearing their perspectives on their successes and challenges in planning for the Super Bowl and Indy 500, including best practices that can be used by those preparing for future mass gatherings.

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