



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hearing Statement of Chairman Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)

***Resourcing DHS' Cybersecurity and Innovation Missions:
A Review of the Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Request for the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency
and the Science and Technology Directorate***

April 30, 2019

I am pleased to have the opportunity to examine an issue critical to our national security posture: the budget request for the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the Science and Technology Directorate. The past month at the Department of Homeland Security has been a tumultuous one. The President dismissed the Secretary, the Under Secretary for Management, the Director of Secret Service, and the Acting Director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement. At the same time, the Mueller Report – even in its redacted form – crystallizes the threat of foreign election interference as the 2020 elections approach.

Over the weekend, one person died and three were injured during Passover services at a California synagogue – six months to the day of the Pittsburgh synagogue shooting that killed 11 – underscoring the growing threat of domestic terrorism at the hands of emboldened white nationalists. And we are a month away from Hurricane Season and there is no Senate confirmed FEMA Administrator. In short, the nation is facing increasingly complex threats and requires steady leadership to confront them. That is why I am pleased that Director Krebs and Acting Under Secretary Bryan are here to talk about the budgets for components charged with leading civilian cybersecurity efforts, protecting critical infrastructure, and developing technologies that make us safer and more secure.

For the record, I have serious concerns regarding the President's FY 2020 budget request for both CISA and S&T. Last September, the former DHS Secretary observed that "that cyber-attacks now exceed the risk of physical attacks." Since the President submitted his last budget request:

- the FBI and DHS issued a joint technical alert warning about Russian cyber attacks against critical infrastructure;
- ransomware attacks have wreaked havoc on local governments from Atlanta to Albany; and,
- the Federal government announced that the Chinese government engaged in a 12-year cyber espionage campaign targeting intellectual property and trade secrets.

This list is far from complete, and after each incident, we have looked to CISA to help us understand and mitigate the consequences and secure the ecosystem from future attacks. Moving forward, we will look to CISA to continue its work improving the cybersecurity posture of 99 Federal agencies, ensure a secure 5G rollout, and help State and local governments keep bad actors out of their election systems. Yet the President's budget would decrease funding for CISA's cybersecurity budget from FY 2019 levels. In the context of the current threat environment, even level funding is as dangerous as a cut. I commend CISA leadership for proactively tackling many of these threats head-on, including by making its cybersecurity capabilities available to Presidential campaigns. The Mueller Report provided far greater detail on the scale and scope of Russian election interference efforts, particularly how the Russians manipulated hacked information from campaigns to sow discord and sway votes. I am glad that CISA is willing to do its part to prevent all forms of election interference. But I'm worried it is writing checks its FY2020 budget can't cash, especially given its important responsibilities to other critical infrastructure sectors. Toward that end, I will be interested to know the level of engagement CISA would be able to undertake under the budget request and how it would grow its support if Congress provided additional funding.

I would also like to raise concerns about funding level requested for S&T. For too long, we have deferred investments in innovative security technologies to fund operations and funding the President's southern border wall. But these cuts have consequences. From reducing first responder training and technology-testing opportunities by closing National Urban Security Technology Laboratory to shrinking homeland security researcher community by cutting University Programs and Centers of excellence, the President's FY 2020 budget shortchanges the future for political wins today. I will fight to restore funding to important innovation activities at S&T.

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