



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

***H.R. 1433, the “Department of Homeland Security Morale, Recognition, Learning and Engagement Act (DHS MORALE Act)”
As Introduced by Representative Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)***

Endorsed by NBPC, NTEU, and AFGE

H.R. 1433, the Department of Homeland Security Morale, Recognition, Learning and Engagement (DHS MORALE) Act would help improve morale among the Department’s 240,000 employees by creating and cataloguing leadership development opportunities, identifying and addressing factors that impact employee engagement, and recognizing employee contributions. Specifically, the *DHS MORALE Act* would:

- Authorize the Department’s Chief Human Capital Officer to develop a career path framework and create opportunities for leader development that is informed by an assessment on the learning and developmental needs of employees in supervisory and non-supervisory roles.
- Direct the Chief Human Capital Officer to maintain a catalogue of development opportunities for employees, such as the DHS Rotation Program.
- Establish an Employee Engagement Steering Committee—comprised of representatives from across the Department, as well as individuals from employee labor organizations that represent DHS employees—to identify factors that impact employee engagement and morale and advise the Secretary on efforts to improve those areas.
- Require the Secretary to distribute a Department-wide Employee Engagement Action Plan, reflecting input from the Steering Committee, to execute strategies to improve employee engagement, morale, and communications.
- Authorize the Secretary to establish an Annual Employee Award Program to recognize employees for significant contributions to the achievement of the Department’s goals and missions.

H.R. 1433, the DHS MORALE Act is necessary after five years in a row of DHS ranking last among large agencies on the list of *Best Places to Work in the Federal Government*. In his exit memorandum, former Secretary of Homeland Security, Jeh Johnson, cited the need “for an aggressive campaign to improve morale and satisfaction at the Department.”¹ This Act helps DHS examine the root cause of longstanding employee morale concerns and determine the best strategy to move the Department in a positive direction.

¹ Johnson, Jeh. U.S. Department of Homeland Security: Record of Progress and Vision for the Future. 5 Jan. 2017.