



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Statement of Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)**

***Full Committee Markup***

**September 7, 2017**

First, I would like to recognize that since we last met as a Full Committee, a major domestic terrorist incident occurred in Charlottesville, VA that resulted in the death of a young woman and injured more than 20 others. We mourn Heather Heyer and pray for her family as well as those who were harmed in this terrible terrorist incident.

Our thoughts today are also with the people of Houston whose communities have been ravaged by Hurricane Harvey as well as the thousands of people who, in recent days, have been battered by Hurricane Irma.

For years Committee Democrats have been calling for this Committee to hold a hearing on domestic terrorism. Just this year alone, we wrote you three times to request such a hearing. I am heartened, though, that you agreed to allow domestic terrorism experts to testify before the Committee on that day.

In the days to come, I hope we can work together to ensure that all three of these diverse, knowledgeable voices can inform our committee about the threats posed by domestic terrorist organizations.

Turning to today's business, I am pleased that we are considering legislation to give CBP officers tools to interdict opioids and other dangerous substances, improve cybersecurity in our ports, enhance general aviation, and reauthorize the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism program.

Looking at the measures under consideration today, it strikes me that the two Democratic measures are particularly timely.

A major center of economic activity, the Port of Houston, which was gravely impacted by Hurricane Harvey is on our minds.

H.R. 3101, the "Strengthening Cybersecurity Information Sharing and Coordination in Our Ports Act of 2017," seeks to improve the level of cybersecurity at the Port of Houston and other ports across the nation.

Another timely issue is the opioid epidemic that, every day, takes the lives of vulnerable Americans across the nation. H.R. 2142, the "INTERDICT Act" will provide

CBP Officers with tools to better interdict fentanyl and other illegal substances to keep them out of our communities.

With that, I look forward to considering the measures before us today that work toward improving the Department of Homeland Security and ensuring that the Department stays on mission.

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