

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Statement of Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson*****Pipelines: Securing the Veins of the American Economy***

April 19, 2016 (Washington) – Today, Committee on Homeland Security Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) delivered the following prepared remarks for the Transportation Security subcommittee hearing entitled “Pipelines: Securing the Veins of the American Economy”:

“The Transportation Security Administration is well-known for its role in commercial aviation security. However, TSA’s responsibility includes oversight of various modes of transportation, including transportation of natural gasses, hazardous liquids, and toxic inhalation hazard pipelines across the United States.

This hearing today is long overdue. The Subcommittee has not had a public hearing on pipeline security since 2010. In the past, this Committee has stated its intention to explore pipeline security under our oversight functions, but time and again, the Committee pivoted to other matters.

Although there have been no successful attacks on U.S. pipelines, it is important that the United States remain vigilant. Pipelines are subject to both physical and cyber attacks.

With nearly 3 million miles of pipelines traversing the nation, it is important that the Committee learns what the both the public and private sectors are doing to ensure that bad actors who want to cause devastation to our nation’s economy and critical infrastructure are not able to do so.

I would like to thank the witnesses for appearing before us today and providing testimony on this subject. Ms. Proctor, I look forward to learning more about how TSA works with the private sector to address pipeline security vulnerabilities.

Mr. Black, I look forward to understanding the perspective of the owners and operators of pipelines, and particularly hearing about your concerns with your response plan submissions and the potential impact of those who wish to do us harm gaining access to the sensitive information contained within these plans.

Ms. Judge, I was pleased to read in your testimony that you believe TSA’s role in facilitating the public-private partnership to address pipeline security offers a healthy level of collaboration, support, and achievement. I look forward to your testimony.

Finally, Mr. Parformak, your expertise regarding the landscape of pipeline security and the historical context and possible implications is greatly appreciated, and we thank you for participating in the discussion today.”

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