



## HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE

### Statement of Subcommittee Chairman Peter T. King (R-NY) Counterterrorism and Intelligence Subcommittee

*“State and Local Perspectives on Federal Information Sharing”  
September 8, 2016*

Remarks as Prepared

Nearly nineteen months ago, this Subcommittee held a hearing entitled “Addressing Remaining Gaps in Federal, State, and Local Information Sharing.” We heard from the same impressive panel before us again today.

During the initial hearing, the witnesses raised a number of important issues, including the need for cyber expertise within state and local law enforcement, providing fusion centers with greater access to FBI terrorism-related data, and concerns about the impact of encrypted communications platforms for law enforcement and counterterrorism investigations.

A number of specific recommendations for the Department of Homeland Security were also raised, such as providing greater access to security clearances, empowering I&A field personnel, and expanding the Homeland Security Information Network, just to name a few. A number of the recommendations became legislative proposals that passed the House late last year and are pending before the Senate.

We’ve asked the witnesses to reconvene to provide an update on the status of these issues and highlight any additional challenges that need continued attention, especially in light of the Administration transition next year.

A cop or sheriff’s deputy on the patrol, an analyst reviewing a suspicious activity report, or a first responder interacting with the public carrying out their daily responsibilities are most likely going to be the first to identify a possible threat. In the event of a terrorist attack, they will be the first to respond.

While carrying out critical security and public safety missions, U.S. law enforcement is facing an increased threat environment. Since September 11, 2001, there have been 166 plots within the United States linked to Islamist terror groups with the vast majority occurring since 2009. In May, FBI Director Comey stated that the Bureau has over 800 open cases related to individuals in the U.S. with links to ISIS.

The terror group has called for attacks against law enforcement directly. In January 2015, a statement from the now deceased spokesman for ISIS, Abu Mohammad al-Adnani, called on supporters to “rise up and kill intelligence officers, police officers, soldiers, and civilians.”

In March 2016, the Caliphate Cyber Army (CCA), a cyber group believed to be the ISIS hacking division, released a “kill list” with names and information on 32 police officers from across Minnesota. During the same time period, CCA published personal information of 55 New Jersey Transit officers and encouraged lone wolf attacks against the officers.

Also troubling is the increase in domestic threats against law enforcement. In some tragic instances, these threats have turned into violence. The National Law Enforcement Memorial Fund website reports there have been 11 shooting ambush attacks on law enforcement in 2016 to date. On July 7, 2016 a gunman killed five police officers in Dallas and seven other individuals while on-duty providing security at a protest rally. Three police officers were killed in an ambush attack on Sunday, July 17, 2016 in Baton Rouge. The attacker had made statements supporting attacks against law enforcement on his social media accounts.

In the last several months, there have been recurring open source media reports that suggest multiple police departments have had social media threats against law enforcement officers in hundreds of jurisdictions across the U.S.

I am gravely concerned that the anti-law enforcement climate. The lack of support shown by many politicians and public figures is further enflaming tensions across the U.S. Not only does this situation threaten law enforcement lives, I'm concerned it may impact their ability to operate, provide needed services, and participate in the national counterterrorism mission.

I want to offer my personal appreciation, admiration and support to the law enforcement, intelligence analysts, and first responders represented by your associations for the vital work they carry out every day.

I look forward to the panel's update and would like to thank Mr. Sena, Chief Beary, and Dr. Alexander for being here today. The input from your respective associations is critical to the Subcommittee's understanding of the threat and progress made to improve the amount and quality of information shared between federal, state and local law enforcement.

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