



## HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE

### Statement of Chairman Michael McCaul (R-TX) Homeland Security Committee

*Organizational Meeting for the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress  
February 1, 2017*

Remarks as Prepared

I would like to welcome all the members of the Committee on Homeland Security to the 115th Congress - both our new members and those returning.

I would like to briefly introduce the new members on the Republican side, and I ask Mr. Thompson to do the same for the new members during his statement: Mike Gallagher, from Wisconsin; Clay Higgins, from Louisiana; John Rutherford, from Florida; Thomas Garrett, from Virginia; and Brian Fitzpatrick, from Pennsylvania.

I am proud of the work this Committee has done over the past four years in a bipartisan manner. In the 114th Congress we passed 89 bills out of Committee, passed 88 on the House floor, and were responsible for 32 Public Laws. We also held almost 90 hearings, 19 markups and produced more than 30 reports. The 114th Congress was the most productive legislative Congress the Committee has ever had. Almost all of these bills passed with bipartisan support.

I would like to thank the Ranking Member for all of his hard work and cooperation during the last Congress. You have been instrumental to the success of this Committee, and I look forward to partnering with you again for the next 2 years.

Despite our successes, there is more work to be done. The Committee on Homeland Security must once again redouble our efforts, remain vigilant and continue to work together. If we cannot succeed as a Committee, then we are failing the country.

In the 115th Congress, the Committee will again focus on counterterrorism efforts both at home and abroad. We must remember, we still are a nation at war.

In 2016, nearly 1000 people were either killed or injured in terror attacks in Western countries. The violence has reached places like Paris, Brussels, Istanbul, Nice and here at home in Chattanooga, San Bernardino, and Orlando. Young jihadists are being radicalized online, and being urged to attack the kuffar – the non-believer – in their own backyard.

This Committee will play a vital role in keeping Americans safe in the coming years.

We will also focus on the border. Our borders remain insecure, and are a matter of national security. We need to put in place a multi-layered defense system so that drug cartels and terrorists don't slip through the cracks.

That means more Border Patrol agents, new authorities, increased aerial surveillance, sensors, and other technology to protect our country. This Committee will do its part to get this job done.

This Committee also needs to do our part to defend our digital frontiers. We are fighting a silent war in cyberspace with unlimited fronts. Nation states, criminals, hacktivists, and terrorists are infiltrating our networks.

Some want to embarrass us, others are seeking to copy our innovation, steal our nation's secrets, and even undermine the very foundation of our republic. Unfortunately, the enemy is winning. We have got to get serious about playing defense, and we should respond in a way that will make our adversaries think twice about doing it again. Cybersecurity will be one of this Committee's top priorities in the 115th Congress. Last, but not least, we will finally re-authorize the Department of Homeland Security.

As the Ranking Member and most in this room know, the Department has not been reauthorized since its inception after the 9/11 attacks.

With an MOU in place with other Committees, I am confident that this long overdue responsibility will finally be accomplished, and we will be able to provide the Department with Congressional Direction that it has lacked for the last 15 years.

We certainly have many other topics to tackle, including supporting America's First Responders, ensuring effective management at the Department; conducting long-term investigations and conducting aggressive day-to-day oversight, to name a few.

I would again like to thank Ranking Member Thompson and his staff for their hard work and collaboration in the 114th Congress.

Although the dynamic in Washington has changed with a new President, I hope that our cooperation and the success of the House Homeland Security Committee will continue.

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