



HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE

Statement of Subcommittee Chairman Pete King (R-NY) Counterterrorism and Intelligence Subcommittee

“Mark up of H.R. 2443, H.R. 2468, H.R. 2454, H.R. 2453, H.R. 2470,
H.R. 2471, H.R. 2433, H.R. 2442, H.R. 2427”

May 18, 2017

Remarks as Prepared

Several months ago, at the beginning of the Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence’s first hearing of the 115th Congress, I noted that “we have an opportunity to carefully, but considerably, improve the homeland security of the United States. To whatever extent possible, this must include bipartisan cooperation and an eye on the vital issue of the safety and security of Americans.”

As this Subcommittee now convenes today for its first markup of the 115th Congress, I am pleased to observe we are indeed seizing this opportunity in a bipartisan fashion. The bills under consideration today build upon constructive Congressional oversight. They contain needed improvements to the Department’s intelligence enterprise and guidance and authorizations that will serve the national security of the United States. Ultimately, these bills will improve the safe and security of the American people.

Of the 9 the bills under consideration today, two require the Department to produce much needed threat assessments on pressing homeland security issues. H.R. 2470, offered by Congressman Rogers, requires the Department to release an annual, comprehensive homeland security threat assessment. This will provide a common threat picture across the Department and for federal, state and local partners. H.R. 2433, offered by Ranking Member Rice, requires DHS to evaluate how terrorist networks are using or could use virtual currencies to support their activities.

Three of the bills before us today seek to enhance coordination and information sharing within the Department’s Intelligence Enterprise. H.R. 2454, the “Department of Homeland Security Data Framework Act,” offered by Congressman Hurd, provides statutory authorization and guidance for the Department’s ongoing initiative to develop the Data Framework, which will consolidate DHS-wide datasets in order to improve unclassified and classified analytic capabilities.

H.R. 2468, the "Unifying DHS Intelligence Enterprise Act," sponsored by Cong. Perry, requires that the Department provide guidance for the analysis and dissemination of information across the Department’s Intelligence Enterprise. This will be the first time such comprehensive guidance is given by the Department’s Chief Intelligence Officer. Additionally, H.R. 2453, the "DHS Intelligence Rotational Assignment Program Act" will further professionalize the workforce of the Department’s Intelligence Enterprise and help to foster the "one DHS" culture across the various component intelligence offices.

The remaining four bills provide support to the Department's state and local law enforcement partners. The TRACER Act, H.R. 2471, introduced by Congressman Rutherford, addresses a major issue identified during the Subcommittee's hearing on prison radicalization last Congress, which is to ensure that fusion center partners receive advance notice when federal inmates with terrorism convictions are about to be released back into their communities. H.R. 2442, offered by Rep. Jackson Lee, requires an annual report on the work of the Department's State and Local Law Enforcement Office. H.R. 2427, sponsored by Rep. Demings, authorizes the Department's production of a catalog of activities and services across the Department that may be useful to state and local law enforcement.

Lastly, H.R. 2443, the "DHS Classified Facility Inventory Act," offered by Rep. Barletta, requires the DHS Chief Security Officer to conduct an inventory of existing DHS-certified secure facilities and then to share this information, as appropriate, with DHS components and with State and locals. This will both ensure that DHS is tracking where they have secure facilities to ensure they are not building new ones in locations that are already covered, and ensures that DHS and state and locals know where they can access top secret and above information and systems.

Independently, each of these bills will improve the homeland security of the United States. Taken together, they provide a major contribution to the safety and security of the American people.

I want to thank all of the Members of the Subcommittee for their work to develop these important bills. I especially want to thank Ranking Member Rice and her staff for their bipartisan cooperation in the lead up to today's markup.

I am hopeful that we will be able to pass all nine bills under consideration and have many of them included in the Full Committee DHS Authorization bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

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