

H.R. 2825, THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

The United States faces dynamic national security challenges brought forth by Islamist terrorists, human traffickers, drug smugglers, and nation-states waging a silent war in cyberspace. These adversaries are constantly looking for ways to inflict as much damage as possible, and over the past 15 years we've sadly had too many wake up calls.

After the 9/11 attacks, our national leaders decided that one of the best ways to protect our country was with the creation of a Department of Homeland Security (DHS). While we are stronger and better prepared today, America's enemies have proven to be very agile. However, we can stay ahead of these ever-evolving threats by reforming and improving DHS through a first ever reauthorization which was brought about by various House committees coordinating on this vital effort.

BY REAUTHORIZING THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, WE WILL:

1. Assert Congress's Article I authority to write laws and give direction to the Department

- Ensures the Department's structure and missions are best linked to securing the homeland;
- Eliminates the Department's Section 872 authority which allows DHS to reorganize without Congressional approval;
- Removes the Secretary's authority to appoint Assistant Secretaries without Congressional approval;
- Authorizes U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) for the first time;
- Reauthorizes the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and the U.S. Secret Service for the first time since those agencies were originally authorized by Congress;
- Requires the U.S. Secret Service Director to be confirmed by the Senate; and
- Reestablishes a five-year term for the TSA Administrator.

2. Create efficiencies by eliminating, consolidating and streamlining programs and offices

- Streamlines offices that constitute "DHS headquarters," better outlines their respective responsibilities, and reduces the number of direct reports to the Secretary;
- Requires the TSA Administrator to develop a plan and timeline to reduce the number of Senior Executive Service positions by 20 percent;
- Strengthens the role of the Under Secretary for Management to implement efficiencies across components to better ensure proper oversight and accountability;
- Strengthens the role of the Chief Information Officer to forge stronger information technology collaboration and increase efficiencies; and
- Requires DHS to review the organization of its offices with research and development and chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosives activities to find efficiencies, streamline structure, and enhance capabilities.

3. Protect taxpayer dollars and hold DHS more accountable

- Mandates DHS identify cost savings at its numerous field offices and bases through real property consolidation and other common sense efforts;
- Reforms DHS's acquisition processes to ensure billions of taxpayer dollars are better safeguarded and tools to secure the homeland are delivered efficiently;
- Creates a FEMA Chief Management Official to modernize internal functions to achieve further efficiencies and accountability;
- Replaces and modernizes the Coast Guard's aging assets in a cost effective and efficient manner, enhances oversight, and reduces inefficiencies to save taxpayer dollars;
- Ensures counterterrorism grant funds are better used to close capability gaps and mandates a more transparent system that measures the return on these vital investments;
- Addresses 21st century disaster preparedness and response challenges by requiring a comprehensive study to assess and make recommendations to reduce disaster costs; and
- Empowers the Chief Financial Officer to continue progress made on the Department's financial statement audits and improve internal controls to better safeguard against waste, fraud, and abuse.

4. Support America's front-line defenders and first responders

- Provides resources, including training and equipment, to first responders to counter the evolving terrorist threats;
- Improves morale by implementing workforce planning efforts, eliminating unnecessary and duplicative human capital policies and better addressing employee misconduct;
- Allows the Department to better focus on recruiting, retraining, and training a qualified workforce;
- Ensures first responders in state and local fusion centers receive timely information on cyber security threats;
- Maintains support for state and local law enforcement presence at airports; and
- Creates a Senior Law Enforcement Advisor position at FEMA to ensure the Administrator has the benefit of expert law enforcement advice and stakeholders have an advocate.

5. Improve American's safety and security

- Strengthens the Department's ability to deny terrorists, human smugglers and traffickers entry into the U.S. by codifying key offices of ICE and USCIS, such as the Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center and the Fraud Detection and National Security Directorate;
- Authorizes and prioritizes investigations of cross-border crime, including immigration document fraud, money laundering, bulk cash smuggling, cybercrimes, and human smuggling and trafficking;
- Implements cargo security best practices, while expanding the use of cargo-screening canines and adapting to evolving threats to cargo security; and
- Integrates existing DHS intelligence systems and data sets into the Data Framework for enhanced vetting and screening capabilities.
- Improves airport access controls, employee vetting, perimeter security, and insider threat mitigation efforts and expands the use of explosive detection K-9 teams;
- Improves surface transportation security by enhancing security awareness standards among front-line surface transportation employees;

- Requires DHS to identify opportunities to integrate explosive detection canine programs within the Department's operational components;
- Authorizes a study on the potential of autonomous technologies to improve the Coast Guard's mission capabilities; and
- Requires the U.S. Secret Service to devise and implement procedures for evaluating threats to the White House and its protectees and evaluate its technology.

6. Improve Preparedness and Readiness Capabilities

- Supports Coast Guard recommended military strength and training levels;
- Allows Coast Guard Commandant to include other federal and non-federal public safety personnel to participate in training to further the goal of interoperability among first responder agencies;
- Reauthorizes the National Domestic Preparedness Consortium, which has trained more than 2.6 million first responders and emergency managers;
- Provides for joint training opportunities for Secret Service officers and agents and increases the number of required training hours;
- Ensures federal departments and agencies meet minimum standards to demonstrate readiness to respond to terrorist attacks, natural disasters, and other man-made disasters; and
- Enhances standard operating procedures at airport checkpoints and international standards for aviation security, including higher standards for airport emergency response.

7. Increase use of enhanced technologies

- Requires DHS to consider the impact of emerging technology in their efforts to achieve nationwide interoperable emergency communications for first responders;
- Expands TSA's use of advanced technologies, including biometrics, explosives detection canines, and next-generation explosives detection technology; and
- Advances the development of eLoran, a crucially needed backup system for GPS navigation;
- Directs DHS to share information on terrorists before they are released from prison with fusion centers and local law enforcement.

8. Enhance Information sharing efforts

- Enhances information sharing efforts within the Department and between DHS and state, local, tribal and territorial partners;
- Allows for the sharing of after-action reports from exercises, normally used by federal participants, with state, local, tribal, and private sector officials who can take action to close identified gaps;
- Ensures port operators have a thorough plan for cybersecurity, and creates a mechanism for port operators to share current cyber threat information and best practices; and
- Directs DHS to better integrate requirements, operations and increasing information and data sharing across all trusted traveler programs.