



Homeland
Security

September 29, 2023

The Honorable Mark E. Green
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Green:

Thank you for your September 18, 2023, letter reiterating your invitation to Secretary Mayorkas to testify before the House Committee on Homeland Security during the week of October 23, 2023. I am responding on behalf of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS or the Department).

DHS is pleased that the Committee has scheduled the annual Worldwide Threats to the Homeland hearing on November 15, 2023. The Department has begun work to ensure that Secretary Mayorkas is prepared to engage with the Committee on the full scope of the threat environment that DHS and its components confront daily. These threats span a wide range of issues, from infrastructure and cybersecurity to economic security and terrorism. The operational experience and expertise for each of these issues is distributed across the full spectrum of the Department's components and preparing for a hearing requires extensive departmentwide coordination.

Preparing for a hearing of this nature must be balanced against the full scope of the Department's responsibilities. This is particularly true considering the work that DHS is currently undertaking in response to other Committee oversight requests. This work includes responding to a subpoena for documents and information related to the CHNV processes, 26 other document requests, and over 30 letters requesting information, briefings, or other engagement with DHS personnel. The Department endeavors to work with Committee staff to understand specific needs, prioritize requests, and to engage in the accommodations process where feasible to facilitate providing information.

In addition to responding to requests from the House Committee on Homeland Security, DHS is also obligated to respond to other committees of jurisdiction across both the House of Representatives and the Senate, which in total exceed 70 Committees and Subcommittees. In the 118th Congress, DHS compliance with the full range of Congressional oversight demands from these Committees of jurisdiction has included 47 hearings with 67 witnesses, as well as the production of over 11,000 pages and countless letter responses. Balancing these requests alongside the routine work that goes into the day-to-day responsibilities of securing the homeland leaves DHS with limited capacity.

The Department continues to appreciate the focus that the Committee has placed on border security, and fully intends to discuss this important issue with the Members. Our partners in federal law enforcement and the Intelligence Community also have equities in the complex issue of border security. Therefore, it is important that the Committee receives a comprehensive and holistic view of the issue from all of the key stakeholders. To date throughout the 118th Congress, DHS officials have participated in five hearings before the Homeland Security Committee and its Subcommittees on various aspects of border security. The Department now welcomes the opportunity to engage in a robust collective discussion alongside our partner agencies on this issue and all other Worldwide Threats to the Homeland on November 15, 2023.

Thank you again for your invitation. DHS Office of Legislative Affairs staff will be in touch to discuss arrangements for the hearing. Should you wish to discuss this or any homeland security issue, please contact the DHS Office of Legislative Affairs at (202) 447-5890.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Zephranie Buetow', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Zephranie Buetow
Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs