



One Hundred Fifteenth Congress
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington DC 20515

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)
In Support of Committee on Homeland Security Budget Request
Before Committee on House Administration
Feb. 15 at 11:45 am (1310 Longworth House Office Bldg.)

Good morning, Chairman Harper and Ranking Member Brady and members of the Committee. I am pleased to be here to support the funding request submitted by my partner on the Committee on Homeland Security, Chairman McCaul.

Last Congress, the Committee was enormously active. In the 114th Congress, the Committee conducted 90 hearings, including six field hearings, and held 19 markups, 59 Member briefings, and three site visits. There was a seventy percent increase in the number of CHS-advanced bills considered by the Full House over the previous Congress. Ultimately, we advanced nearly 90 measures to the House floor and succeeded in having forty enacted into law in some form or fashion. With respect to oversight, we had great success particularly with respect to identifying efficiencies in DHS headquarters operations and improving operations at TSA and CBP. Another oversight highlight was the bipartisan work undertaken by the “Task Force on Combating Terrorist and Foreign Fighter Travel.”

As we look to the next two years, there is an expectation that the Committee will be heavily involved in preparing and advancing comprehensive authorization legislation for the Department of Homeland Security. Congress after Congress, jurisdictional barriers have prevented the Department – *the third largest Federal agency*—from being reauthorized since it was established in 2002. The closest this Committee has ever gotten to fully authorizing DHS was a decade ago, in 2007, when the House approved comprehensive legislation I authored.

This Congress, Chairman McCaul executed an agreement to advance a package with the chairmen of the eight other Committees with jurisdictional claims in the homeland security space. Without changes to the black-letter jurisdiction, success is not guaranteed and roadblocks are a certainty. This important undertaking is expected to be resource-intensive. As such, the Committee is seeking \$300,000 in increased funding. Of that amount, \$100,000 is necessary for Committee Democrats to fully-participate in the DHS authorization process.

By approving our budget request for the 115th Congress, you would be helping Congress carry out its constitutional responsibilities to oversee the Executive Branch. Specifically, by doing so, you would be ensuring that CHS has the resources to translate our oversight findings into legislation to help the Department mature and succeed in its vital mission of securing the nation from the many threats we face.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.