



**The Honorable Jeh C. Johnson**

**Secretary**

**U.S. Department of Homeland Security**

**Testimony**

**Before the**

**Committee on Homeland Security**

**U.S. House of Representatives**

**February 26, 2014**

Statement of Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Charles Johnson  
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Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Thompson, and Members of this Committee, thank you for the opportunity to be here. I have appreciated your kind words, encouragement, and support in the days leading up to today's hearing. I look forward to working with this Committee to meet the critical mission of homeland security.

In this, my first opportunity to testify before this Committee, I would like to spell out my vision for the Department I am privileged to lead.

As each of you is aware, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was born out of the tragic events of 9/11.

I am a New Yorker who was present in Manhattan on 9/11. Therefore, out of the events of that day, which happens to be my birthday, my personal commitment to the mission of homeland security was also born.

As the senior lawyer for the Department of Defense for four years from 2009 through 2012, I was at the center of much of this government's counterterrorism efforts during that period. Through the efforts of both the Bush and Obama Administrations, we have put al Qaeda's core leadership on a path to strategic defeat. My best day as a lawyer and public servant was May 1, 2011, the day our special forces got bin Laden. My second best day was May 5, 2011, the day I returned to Manhattan, with the President, to meet with the families of the victims of 9/11. Their message to the President was simple: "thank you." Bin Laden's death brought *them* some degree of closure, but *our* work must continue.

And, given how the terrorist threat to this country is evolving, I welcome the opportunity to continue that work as the leader of the Department of Homeland Security.

We must remain vigilant in detecting and preventing terrorist threats that may seek to penetrate the homeland from the land, sea or air. We must continue to build relationships with state and local law enforcement, and the first responders in our

communities, to address the threats we face from those who self-radicalize to violence, the so-called “lone wolf” who may be living quietly in our midst, inspired by radical, violent ideology to do harm to Americans— illustrated last year by the Boston Marathon bombing.

Addressing each of these types of threats is a matter for the Department of Homeland Security in close collaboration with other departments and agencies.

The cornerstone of the homeland security mission has been, and should continue to be, counterterrorism, that is, protecting the nation against terrorist attacks.

Security along our borders and at ports of entry is also a matter of homeland security. At our borders and ports of entry, we must deny entry to terrorists, drug traffickers, human traffickers, transnational criminal organizations, and other threats to national security and public safety while continuing to facilitate legal travel and trade.

We must be agile in addressing threats to border security. We must dedicate resources where the threats exist, and be prepared to move when they move.

We are gratified by the support Congress has provided to improve security at our borders and ports of entry. With that support, we’ve made great progress. There is now more manpower, technology and infrastructure on our borders than ever before, and our men and women in and around the border are producing results.

For example, on February 10 a task force led by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement shut down a 481-foot drug smuggling tunnel between Nogales, Mexico and Nogales Arizona, arrested three men involved in the smuggling operation, and seized 640 pounds of marijuana.

Meanwhile, our law enforcement and national security partners in the government of Mexico are making great strides in our common interest of combating drug trafficking, violence and illicit activity along our shared border, marked by the operation to capture Joaquin “Chapo” Guzman Loera, the alleged leader of the Sinaloa Cartel, on February 22. We congratulate the government of Mexico for these efforts.

As you know, more needs to be done.

The day in January I visited the Port Isabel Detention Center near Brownsville, Texas, I saw about 1,000 detainees, 18% of whom were Mexican, and the rest representing over

30 different nationalities who migrated through Mexico in an effort to get to the United States.

Smuggling organizations are responsible for almost all those who cross the border illegally. We must attack these networks. And when individuals are detained in our custody, we must ensure our detention facilities are safe and humane.

And, as part of reforming our immigration system, we support the additional border and port security resources that common sense immigration reform legislation would provide.

The President, many members of Congress, the business and labor communities, and others all recognize that immigration reform is a matter of economic growth. In my view, immigration reform is also a matter of homeland security. There are an estimated 11.5 million undocumented immigrants living in this country. Most have been here for years. Many came here as children. I believe that, as a matter of homeland security, we should encourage these people to come out of the shadows of American society, pay taxes and fines, be held accountable, and be given the opportunity to get on a path to citizenship like others. Allowing individuals to come out of the shadows will also allow DHS to dedicate even more focus and attention on public safety, national security, and border security threats. I support common sense immigration reform and the additional resources it would bring.

DHS must continue efforts to address the growing cyber threat to the private sector and the “.gov” networks, illustrated by the real, pervasive, and ongoing series of attacks on public and private infrastructure.

In this effort, I believe that, for DHS, building trust and relationships with the private sector is crucial.

Through the President’s Executive Order 13636 on critical infrastructure cybersecurity, and Presidential Policy Directive 21 on strengthening the security and resilience of critical infrastructure, we are continuing to strengthen our partnerships with the private sector.

On February 12, the White House made public the “Cybersecurity Framework,” which is a set of best practices and voluntary guidelines for the private sector. Initial reports are the Framework has received a positive reaction from the private sector. That same day,

DHS stood up for public use the Critical Infrastructure Cyber Community – or “C<sup>3</sup>” – Voluntary Program, which gives companies direct access to cybersecurity experts within DHS who have knowledge of the threats we face. There is more to do.

I believe it is crucial that, for the cybersecurity mission to succeed, we must recruit the next generation of cybersecurity talent to serve in government. For this, I have embarked on a personal recruitment campaign. On February 14, I visited Georgia Tech and Morehouse College to encourage students there interested in cybersecurity to consider public service. I am planning other visits to colleges and universities for the same purpose.

Many in Congress have expressed a willingness to help in cybersecurity. We appreciate those efforts. I have studied H.R. 3696 reported out of this Committee on a bipartisan basis. We think this bill is a good step forward. We want to continue working with Congress on this and other legislation to improve the government and nation’s overall cybersecurity posture.

We must continue to be vigilant in preparing for and responding to disasters, including floods, wildfires, winter storms, tornadoes, hurricanes, droughts, and chemical leaks like the one into the Elk River in West Virginia that threatened the water supply of hundreds of thousands of people.

FEMA has come a long way from the days after Hurricane Katrina. We have improved disaster planning with public and private sector partners, non-profit organizations, and the American people. We have learned how to pre-position a greater number of resources and we have helped to strengthen the Nation’s ability to respond to disasters in a quick and robust fashion.

For example, on Tuesday, February 11, the President signed an emergency declaration in response to the severe winter storm that rolled through Georgia that week. By 6pm on Thursday February 13, FEMA had shipped to the state 112 generators, 453,000 liters of water, over 1,000,000 meals, over 7,000 blankets, over 2,000 cots, and 2,500 tarps.

We must continue good work like this.

We must be mindful of the environment in which we pursue these missions:

First, we operate in a time of severe budget constraints. The days are over when those of us in national and homeland security can expect more and more to be added each

year to our top line budgets. As Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, I believe I am obliged to identify and eliminate inefficiencies, waste, and unnecessary duplications of resources across DHS's large and decentralized bureaucracy, while pursuing important missions such as the recapitalization of the aging Coast Guard fleet.

I compliment TSA for its recent decision to realign the number of Federal Air Marshal offices across the country, to achieve greater efficiencies while continuing to perform this critical mission, and I am encouraging other DHS components to think in these terms.

To achieve greater efficiencies, we must manage our large and diffuse bureaucracy more effectively. I am pleased that late last year DHS received its first unqualified, or "clean," audit opinion, a significant achievement just ten years after the largest realignment and consolidation of U.S. government agencies and functions since the creation of the Department of Defense. At my direction, we are also working to get DHS programs off the GAO "high risk" list.

Second, I am mindful of the surveys that reflect that morale is low within various components of DHS. I intend to constantly remind our workforce of the critical importance of their homeland security mission, and that the Department's greatest asset in the pursuit of that mission is our people.

I will be a champion for the men and women of DHS, and I will advocate on their behalf.

I did not enjoy, early in my tenure, suspending Administratively Uncontrollable Overtime pay for certain categories of DHS workers. I continue to support overtime for DHS personnel who earn it and require it, especially the men and women in the field working to keep our nation safe, but we must work within the laws and rules pursuant to which overtime is sought and received.

We must inject a new energy into DHS, and good leadership starts with recruiting other good leaders to join the team to help run the organization. With the help of the White House and Congress, we are actively recruiting terrific people to fill the large number of senior management vacancies that have existed within DHS.

We look forward to the Senate confirmation of Suzanne Spaulding to be Undersecretary for National Protection and Programs Directorate; Gil Kerlikowske to be the next Commissioner of Customs and Border Protection; John Roth to be the next Inspector

General; Leon Rodriguez to be the next Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services; and Dr. Reggie Brothers to be the next Under Secretary for Science and Technology.

I am very pleased that on February 12 the President nominated retired Brigadier General Frank Taylor, the former Ambassador-at-large for Counterterrorism, to be our next Undersecretary for Intelligence & Analysis. We are working to recruit terrific people to fill other key positions, including the next Undersecretary for Management, Director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and the Chief Financial Officer.

Finally, the Department's ability to serve the American people well requires effective oversight by Congress. I want to work with this Committee to reform DHS congressional jurisdiction, which is spread across more than 100 committees and subcommittees of Congress. More than ten years after the Department's creation, it is time to fulfill this 9/11 Commission recommendation and streamline the current oversight structure.

For my part, I have directed my staff and our component leadership to be responsive to inquiries and letters from members and committees of Congress. I have begun a practice of personally reading each letter addressed to me from any member of Congress, and, along with the Deputy Secretary, I track the status to ensure you receive the responses promptly.

In all, I believe DHS must be agile and vigilant in continually adapting to evolving threats and hazards. We must learn from and adapt to the changing character of the threats and hazards we face: 9/11; Hurricane Katrina in 2005; the underwear bomber in 2009; the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010; Hurricane Sandy in 2012; and the Boston Marathon bombing in 2013 illustrate these evolving threats and hazards. We must stay one step ahead of the next terrorist attack, the next cyber attack, and the next natural disaster.

In the pursuit of this important mission, I pledge to this Committee my total dedication and all the energy I possess.

Thank you for listening and I look forward to your questions.