



Statement for the Record

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“Securing Our Communities: Federal Support to High-Risk Urban Areas”

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Introduction

Chairman Donovan, Ranking Member Payne, distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today – along with my colleagues from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The men and women of the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A) work diligently to produce timely, actionable intelligence and information to help keep the homeland safe, secure, and resilient, and I am proud to speak to you on their behalf.

In my testimony today, I will describe the current threat environment and how I&A shares intelligence with our state and local partners to support their important work of keeping local communities safe. Each year, I&A works with FEMA’s Grant Programs Directorate to support the Department’s annual Homeland Security Grant Programs (HSGP) counterterrorism grant programs to provide threat analysis and data to inform their Homeland counterterrorism risk assessments. I&A reviews shared intelligence reporting produced by the intelligence community (IC) along with state and local threat reporting and other sources to provide FEMA with a relative threat ranking for the top 100 Metropolitan Statistical Areas and states and territories in the Homeland. This threat ranking allows FEMA to ensure limited funds are allocated to the cities with the highest risk and informs the Secretary’s decisions regarding funding allocations. The State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) and Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), grant programs within HSGP, are important components in supporting state and local efforts to prevent terrorist attacks and other catastrophic events, and helps our state and local partners prepare for and response to significant threats to our nation.

Protecting the Nation in an Evolving Threat Environment

The threats we face from terrorism today are much more diverse than in the time immediately following the September 11th attacks. We face a serious, persistent, and varied terror threat, which will not diminish in the near future.

While we have made it harder for terrorists to execute complex, large-scale attacks, changes in technology have made it easier for our adversaries to plot attacks generally, to radicalize new followers to commit acts of violence, and to recruit beyond our borders. The problem is further compounded by the use of simple, “do-it-yourself” terrorist tactics conveyed via highly sophisticated terrorist marketing campaigns to a global audience.

Similarly, the threat from transnational criminal organizations has and continues to grow. These organizations are highly mobile, maintain sophisticated cross-border networks, and are involved in a wide-range of criminal activities including human smuggling, and the trafficking of drugs and firearms. These criminal organizations will likely continue to employ and improve their intelligence capabilities through a variety of methods including human, technical, and cyber means. These activities all have a significant impact on the safety, security, and health of citizens in our homeland.

The dangers we face as a people are becoming more dispersed with threat networks proliferating across borders. This shifting landscape constantly challenges our security; as such, we must move past traditional defense and non-defense mindsets. For this reason, the Department is overhauling its approach to integrating intelligence with operations --changing how we proactively address threats. Success in proactively addressing threats depends on

support between and collaboration with our partners, which is the lifeblood of successful intelligence efforts.

One of the Department's top priorities to address this evolving threat environment is to more effectively integrate intelligence equities into our operational mission. DHS is utilizing valuable information uncovered by our warfighters, the IC, and law enforcement professionals to adapt quickly to an ever-evolving threat at home and abroad. Driving multi-directional information exchanges with our state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) partners to fill critical information and intelligence gaps is a unique part of I&A's mission. We are the only member of the IC explicitly charged in statute to share intelligence and threat information with SLTT partners, and are also responsible for developing intelligence from those partners for DHS and the IC. In support of this mission, we work closely with our DHS operational components, including the Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction (CWMD) Office, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP); as well as interagency partners, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the National Counterterrorism Center to support the integration of SLTT partners into the overall national capability. We also share intelligence that helps front-line operators identify, disrupt, and respond to known and unknown threats. We are committed to continuing our efforts, along with our colleagues in the Intelligence Community, to ensure that our partners have the threat information they need to protect our communities.

I&A deploys intelligence professionals dedicated to providing intelligence and information sharing support to SLTT partners. These professionals in the field are one of our most unique and valuable assets. We deploy them across the country to enable regular, direct engagement with SLTT partners for collaboration, production, and dissemination of timely, actionable intelligence. Their involvement spans the spectrum of activities, from the development of joint intelligence products with SLTT partners, to the collection and reporting of locally generated information that we share with federal partners and the IC. For example, our intelligence professionals covering the New York City (NYC) area work closely with the New York City Police and Fire Departments to provide timely intelligence and access to IC capabilities. At least bi-weekly, our intelligence officer briefs the NYPD on cyber threats and threats specific to New York.

The collaboration I have discussed is enhanced through FEMA's Homeland Security Grants Program. While only a portion of fusion centers' budgets are supported through homeland security grants, the HSGP plays a critical role in helping build and sustain fusion centers and our decentralized information sharing capability. In fact, Fusion Center investments from the UASI and SHSP have totaled more than \$300 million over the past five years. The HSGP has also been an instrumental tool in helping drive consistency and standardization in the way in which fusion centers operate. For example, the annual HSGP guidance identifies a suite of requirements for fusion centers as a requirement for receiving funding. This criteria-based approach allows DHS to influence the operations of the fusion centers, which are owned and operated by state and local entities. Driving toward common and consistent operation of fusion centers across the country will provide long term, and sustainable benefits, to our collective homeland security efforts.

Conclusion

Chairman Donovan, Ranking Member Payne, distinguished members of the Committee, thank you again for your continued oversight, support, and the opportunity to testify today. In collaboration with our state and local partners, we will continue to adapt to meet the current threat environment and prepare for the future. I look forward to your questions.