

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence
THACI Subcommittee Hearing on Intelligence Role of the Department
of Homeland Security

January 18, 2012

RANKING MEMBER OPENING STATEMENT

Thank you, Madame Chair and welcome to all of the witnesses. Thank you for taking the time to inform this subcommittee about your observations and proposals regarding the future intelligence role and mission of the Department of Homeland Security.

DHS' place in the US intelligence architecture has been a topic of congressional oversight since its creation and remains a work in progress without final resolution.

In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, DHS Intelligence was predominantly focused on counterterrorism.

That was a time when CIA led all-source terrorism analysis and the FBI effort was primarily based in law enforcement.

Subsequently, Congress established the National Counterterrorism Center under the direction of the Director of National Intelligence and directed FBI to conduct domestic intelligence collection and analysis. In addition, CIA, DIA, NSA and the other IC members continue to collect and analyze terrorism-related intelligence.

Since we have increased the number of intelligence entities covering terrorism since 9/11, I would like the witnesses to discuss the value-added they see that DHS is contributing – or can further contribute -- to the Intelligence Community's wide-ranging counterterrorism program.

Last September, we commemorated the tenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. It now makes sense to step back from daily oversight and consider the pros and cons of expansion of the DHS intelligence mission to other areas, such as cybersecurity.

However, this discussion must take into account that DHS has developed a terrorism-focused intelligence infrastructure, its performance of that mission and its ability to take on different or additional missions. The question is not just what DHS Intelligence **should** do in the future, but whether DHS is **able** to do it.

I am interested in hearing our witnesses' assessments of DHS' intelligence strengths and challenges, in context with the proposals discussed in the Aspen report.

If you believe that DHS is not currently positioned to assume the proposed expanded role, please tell me what must change for it to handle the new intelligence missions?

This is an important topic that we must get right for the continued security of our nation. I look forward to hearing your observations and recommendations.

Thank you, Madame Chair.