



COMMITTEE *ON* HOMELAND SECURITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Opening Statement of Chairman Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)

Full Committee Markup of H.R. 1140, 1494, 5273, 5670, 5678, 5679, and 5680

January 29, 2020

Today we will be considering seven bipartisan measures. While some of the measures take on emerging homeland security challenges, others speak to longstanding ones. The road for H.R. 1140, the “Rights for Transportation Security Officers Act,” has been a long one. The frontline workforce at TSA has been waiting for nearly two decades to get the rights, compensation, and protections that most other Federal workers take for granted. Under H.R. 1140, that would happen. I am pleased that it has unprecedented, bipartisan support.

Today, with the consideration of H.R. 5679 and H.R. 5680, the Committee will also be advancing measures to ensure that the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) has the necessary tools to protect industrial control systems and other critical infrastructure from cyber threats and to ensure stability in CISA leadership.

In addition to these measures, we will be considering bills to:

- Bolster the scanning of dangerous cargo at land ports
- Strengthen the DHS Privacy Office
- Foster partnerships between DHS and Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other Minority Serving Institutions
- Enhance transportation security

I look forward to today’s debate and to seeing these bills advance to the floor and then to the Senate. While the Committee has had some success working with the Senate, most notably the Non-Profit Security Grant Program Act, which was signed into law in recent days, there are over 30 bills that the House approved that have yet to be acted upon by the Senate. In the coming months, we will be looking to the Senate to not only advance these measures but extend the authorization for DHS’ chemical security program and, in the spring, working with us on DHS authorization legislation.

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