



## COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

#### *Federal Protective Service: Ensuring the Mission is Not Lost in Transition*

June 11, 2019

History has a way of repeating itself, as nearly 10 years ago we were holding a similar hearing on FPS's transfer from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to the National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD). Now today, we are examining yet another plan to move the agency within the Department of Homeland Security. This time to the Management Directorate.

While it is a small agency in size, FPS has an enormous mission. FPS is charged with protecting approximately 9,000 federal buildings, and the more than 1.4 million personnel, visitors, and customers that enter them each day. It works to prevent criminal and terrorist acts and other hazards at federal facilities by assisting tenants with writing and implementing facility-specific emergency plans, establishing procedures on handling suspicious mail or bomb threats, and providing active shooter and other safety awareness trainings for government personnel.

In light of this critical role, we must ensure that FPS's transition is successful.

When FPS was transferred to NPPD from ICE, the transition for five mission-support functions was delayed, resulting in increased transition costs. Those mission-support functions included: IT services, business continuity and emergency preparedness, security integrity and personnel security, facilities, and equal employment opportunity. Moreover, FPS's move to NPPD did not enable FPS to mature as an agency and address shortcomings as was hoped for. FPS continued to wrestle with funding constraints, overseeing its large contract force, and carrying out its mission in NPPD. NPPD's own transformation into the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency overshadowed FPS. Given that the move to Management will be the third transition that FPS undergoes – and the second within DHS – I hope we get it right this time around.

I am pleased that DHS finally made a decision regarding the new placement of FPS as I am sure that the angst regarding its landing wore on employee morale. And I am optimistic that placement in the Management Directorate will provide more visibility and opportunity for growth for FPS. However, to finally get it right, the Management Directorate and FPS must ensure that it properly aligns its activities and resources. Further, the Department must commit to addressing FPS' long-standing challenges and foster its ability to be more independent.

Not doing so puts at risk the security of federal facilities, and the millions of people who work in or visit them.

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