



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

Task Force on Enhancing Security for Special Events in the United States: Briefing with FIFA and LA28

September 17, 2025

Thank you as well to our briefers for joining us today, although my understanding is that the Task Force planned a public hearing—as this Committee regularly does to receive testimony from witnesses. I understand your organizations essentially refused to appear and testify under oath. I was sorry to hear that.

My Republican colleagues and the Trump administration have repeatedly called for “radical transparency,” so I was surprised to learn that they took what was supposed to be a public hearing and hid the non-scripted part behind closed doors. The American taxpayer is footing a bill of upwards of \$1.65 billion in Republicans’ One Big Beautiful Bill alone. The public should hear about how that money will be spent to keep them safe.

In any case, you are here, and I hope that today’s discussion is fruitful. I expect that it will be only an opening conversation that leads to a public hearing so the American people can learn about security in their communities during the World Cup and Olympics. I look forward to discussing security preparations for the 2026 World Cup and the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games with today’s briefers.

These events will bring millions of visitors from around the world to our communities. It’s vital that we do all we can to ensure these games are safe, secure, and fun for everyone we will welcome as our guests to this country.

I want this Task Force and the Committee to be a resource for FIFA, the LA28 host committee, and State, local, Tribal, territorial, and private partners. We are here today to learn—and to find ways to help. But we are also here to do oversight. In addition to hearing from FIFA and LA28 about security for these global sporting events, I want to know how the Trump administration’s policies are affecting the events, organizers, and host cities.

How does the delay in releasing congressionally appropriated funding for World Cup and Olympics security affect planning and procurement? Do those delays help or harm security? The World Cup and Olympics—and the cities that are footing the bill for them—rely on spectators traveling to the United States, spending money, getting hotel rooms, eating food, and enjoying themselves.

I am curious how the Trump administration’s draconian travel bans and takeovers of American cities are affecting travelers to the United States—and how the drop in travel is affecting planning for the World Cup and Olympics. We all want to see these sporting events flourish, and we want the United States to shine. That’s why it is so important to hear from FIFA and LA28 today—and publicly at a hearing in the future.

Together, this Task Force and our Committee can work with our partners to ensure these events are safe. We can advocate for policies that make it easier for people to travel, spend money, and enjoy the freedom that America offers. And we can enhance coordination at the state and local levels with FIFA and LA28.

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