



COMMITTEE *ON* HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

CISA 2025: The State of American Cybersecurity from CISA's Perspective

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The subject of today's hearing is of particular importance to me, since I was one of a small group of legislators who spent years working on legislation to remake CISA's predecessor agency – a small, under-resourced headquarters component known as the National Protection and Programs Directorate – into the operational cyber powerhouse we know today.

Since Congress established CISA four and a half years ago, the agency has developed a broad range of capabilities to defend critical infrastructure from cyber and physical threats. I am proud of the Homeland Security Committee's bipartisan work to ensure CISA has the authorities and resources necessary to fulfill its broad and incredibly important mission, and I have been impressed with how Director Easterly has utilized these authorities to build out CISA's capabilities and visibility.

As CISA continues to mature as an agency, it is essential that it maintain a clear vision of the agency's role. In particular, as the agency determines its priorities, CISA must ensure that both cyber and physical threats continue to receive the necessary attention. I was concerned that the President's Budget Request included proposed cuts to vital programs within the Infrastructure Security Division. The distinction between cyber and physical threats is not always as clear as it may seem, and CISA's ability to coordinate security efforts against all threats is part of what gives it a unique role in defending critical infrastructure. Continuing to balance investments across all divisions will produce the most security benefits.

To that end, I am also interested to hear more about CISA's plans for the National Risk Management Center, which if utilized properly, has the potential to become a vital center for risk analysis, serving CISA, other Federal agencies, and critical infrastructure more broadly. The Biden Administration's new National Cybersecurity Strategy, released earlier this year, lays out ambitious goals for improving the state of our Nation's cybersecurity. The Strategy provides clear objectives for Federal agencies to implement as they carry out their cybersecurity mission.

CISA's role as the national coordinator for critical infrastructure security and resilience will make it a central player in bringing together the Federal government, state and local governments, and the private sector in carrying out the Strategy. But, considering the broad range of stakeholders that CISA serves, it risks being pulled in too many directions.

I look forward to hearing more about how CISA plans to contribute to the Strategy's implementation as the Administration develops more detailed plans for implementing its strategic objectives, and how CISA will prioritize its own goals. As CISA continues to grow as an agency, I appreciate that it is working hard to fill the many vacancies in its ranks. I urge CISA to use the significant hiring it plans to undertake in the coming year to improve the diversity of its own workforce, just as it must prioritize efforts to educate and train a more diverse cyber workforce nationally.

Additionally, expanding the number and diversity of voices CISA hears from as it consults with outside stakeholders, both formally and informally, will make CISA better able to address the broad range of threats our Nation faces. I hope as the Cybersecurity Advisory Committee continues its work going forward that its makeup will be more inclusive of the number of women and people of color with cybersecurity expertise whose perspective CISA would benefit from hearing.

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