



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Field Hearing Statement of Emergency Management & Technology Subcommittee Ranking Member Troy Carter (D-LA)

Evolving Threats: Security and Safety in a Post-9/11 World

September 12, 2023

I want to extend my gratitude to the witnesses here today. First responders, like yourselves, keep communities safe from terrorist threats.

Today, we are gathered in the 9/11 Memorial and Museum to mark a solemn occasion. Twenty-two years ago, nineteen terrorists hijacked four commercial airplanes, leading to the death of nearly 3,000 people. I want to send my heartfelt condolences and unwavering support to the families of each victim who died on that ill-fated day.

September 11, 2001, will forever be imprinted into our hearts as a day that terrorists tried to destroy our nation. While we lost thousands of lives, brave first responders, including one of our witnesses here today, First Deputy Commissioner Pfeifer, helped save thousands more by rushing into burning buildings without thinking about their well-being. Their courageous actions then and now are the reason why New York City is still standing here today.

The events on 9/11 revealed significant homeland security challenges, including the lack of dedicated funding to help state and local officials manage terrorist threats. In the aftermath of 9/11, the Department of Homeland Security was established, and grant programs, such as the Urban Area Security Initiative, the State Homeland Security Grant Program, and the Securing the Cities Program, were created to provide funding to cities and states to help improve preparedness and response to terrorist threats.

Limited communications technology was also a challenge during 9/11 response, which the 9/11 Commission highlighted in their report. First responders did not have an effective way to communicate with one another, contributing to a higher death toll.

Since 9/11, Congress has worked to strengthen our communications abilities and created the First Responder Network Authority in 2012, establishing a nationwide broadband network for first responders. While we have made vast improvements, more needs to be done. I look forward to discussing how we can best support our first responders and secure our communities.

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