

Testimony of

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“Domestic Terrorism”

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Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Rogers, Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present to you the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Intelligence Enterprise efforts to ensure that all forms of violence that are a threat to homeland security are being addressed regardless of ideological motivation. I am pleased to be here today with my colleague, Mr. Michael McGarrity, Assistant Director for Counterterrorism from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), to discuss our coordinated efforts to combat the threat from domestic terrorism. Alongside its interagency partners, DHS remains committed to preventing all forms of terrorism, both international and domestic, as well as preventing acts of targeted violence that threaten homeland security.

Before detailing our efforts against the threat, I would like to begin by responding directly to recent inaccurate press reporting that DHS has dramatically reduced its efforts on domestic terrorism.

I can assure the Committee and the American public that throughout the careful calculus of balancing resources and adapting to an ever-changing threat landscape, DHS remains acutely focused on the threat from domestic terrorism.

The domestic terrorism threat to the Homeland may come from a diverse range of movements—including, but not limited to, racially motivated extremism, militia extremism, anarchist extremism, sovereign citizen extremism, environmental and animal rights extremism, anti-abortion extremism, and anti-government extremism. Lone actors subscribing to these ideologies pose the greatest threat to the Homeland due to their ability, in many instances, to remain undetected by law enforcement until operational and their general willingness to attack soft targets with simple weapons, as in the October 2018 white supremacist extremist shooting at a Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania synagogue and the most recent synagogue attack in Poway, California.

The DHS Intelligence Enterprise constantly evaluates how to improve our ability to provide information and intelligence to a wide array of partners that compliment U.S. Government

(USG) efforts to combat all threats to the Homeland, ensuring that our finite resources are best aligned and not being applied in a manner that duplicates the efforts of our partners. To that end, in 2018 the Department established Mission Centers to drive the integration of intelligence across align to threat streams affecting the Homeland—including counterterrorism (CT).

My testimony today will outline the holistic and agile manner in which we continue to apply resources against the serious threat of domestic terrorism while avoiding unnecessary duplication.

The importance of an integrated and collaborative approach cannot be understated in today's CT environment as post September 11th CT investments across the USG are being re-considered and in some cases re-allocated against developing threat streams such as foreign influence, cyber security, and transnational crime. Of note, CT practitioners across the government recognize that the CT threat is not going away, as much as the other threat streams are gaining pace. The ability to execute the demanding CT mission of the future will be based on efficient interagency/departmental models more so than new resources.

Historically, the FBI has been well positioned to produce intelligence on domestic terrorism. As the USG lead for domestic terrorism investigations, the FBI owns the preponderance of domestic terrorism information and had the requisite resources to support analyzing that data. For that reason, DHS domestic terrorism related intelligence production was sometimes viewed as duplicative as we relied on that data for our analysis.

DHS decided that it should pivot to reporting on domestic terrorism to better support the National Strategy for Counterterrorism, enable DHS to more effectively coordinate our resources and capabilities, and better serve the needs of states and local communities that rely on the rapid production of information to combat this threat. The change in approach was also coordinated with a wide range of interagency and state and local law enforcement partners.

DHS and the FBI have improved collaborative efforts, increased our effectiveness, and even increased in several instances, the resources DHS utilizes to produce effective intelligence that anticipates threats in the pursuit of preventing these types of attacks on the American people. Specifically, we have significantly increased our open source collection against domestic violent extremist groups. We have also been working with our partners in the FBI to provide context on the domestic terrorism threat with particular attention to tactics and techniques domestic violent extremists utilize to conduct their attacks. For example, in the wake of the horrific shootings in San Diego we supported the DHS Office for Civil Rights/Civil Liberties on an unclassified conference call with members of the faith-based community nation-wide to provide them information and context on the threats to religious facilities and best practices for securing their facilities.

The DHS Intelligence Enterprise recognizes the importance of executing its mission against domestic terrorism and has allocated resources appropriately to lead and support efforts against this threat stream. In order to meet the CT requirements of today and tomorrow, the

Department's Counterterrorism Mission Center (CTMC) uses a plan based upon interagency relationships, personnel deployments, and de-confliction. To that end, the CTMC has, or plans to deploy personnel to the National Counterterrorism Center, the FBI, and the DHS components within the DHS Intelligence Enterprise with CT equities to better meet customer requirements.

As noted, the Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A) previously produced domestic terrorism analytic intelligence products primarily based off information from other agencies for consumption by our state and local partners. While I&A still facilitates information sharing with those partners, we have focused on continued collaboration with the FBI and other CT partners at the Federal level on these finished intelligence products. Additionally, we have now transitioned to a more active intelligence phase and are producing more original and unique reporting. As part of the establishment of Mission Centers, a 24/7 open source collection team was established to identify potential threat intelligence. Due to this shift, the DHS Intelligence Enterprise has increased open source collection and reporting on domestic terrorism. As a result, I&A has produced over 250 analytic and tactical intelligence products related to domestic terrorism last fiscal year and is on pace for similar production this fiscal year.

In addition to this enhanced open source collection effort, we maintain a robust presence in the field that engages with our state, local, tribal, territorial, and private sector (SLTTP) partners and continues to expand reporting on domestic terrorism. The DHS Intelligence Enterprise executes this mission through its Field Operations Division (FOD), which is comprised of over a hundred intelligence operations specialists forward deployed to state and major urban area fusion centers and other strategic locations nationwide. Through continued engagement and integration with SLTTP partners in the field, FOD personnel work tirelessly to execute the intelligence cycle at the local level. This effort includes conducting intelligence collection and reporting, strategic intelligence analysis, and intelligence dissemination in an effort to further strengthen local information sharing.

We are actively engaged with partners throughout the public and private sectors.

Through the Homeland Security Information Network – Intelligence (HSIN-Intel), I&A enables the sharing of products and information between all levels of government. HSIN-Intel is utilized by over 4,000 professionals across the country, and includes over 40,000 products on a range of homeland security threats to include domestic terrorism.

In addition, we have recently announced plans to utilize existing resources to develop a National Threat Evaluation and Reporting (NTER) program to enhance the reporting of tips and leads associated with potential mass casualty events linked to terrorism and mass casualty incidents involving targeted violence threatening homeland security in the United States. The effort advances our partners' abilities to identify, evaluate, and report certain violent behaviors, and builds on the success of the Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative (NSI). As currently envisioned, the NTER Program will train partners to identify and evaluate homeland security threats where victims in mass casualty events are chosen because of their race, religion

or ethnicity. We believe NTER could prove a valuable tool for our partners across both the public and private sectors in preventing domestic terrorism.

CTMC also plays an integral role in terrorism prevention efforts across DHS, and will expand upon current opportunities with the newly established Office for Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention in the DHS Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans. Information requirements from the DHS prevention office routinely are ingested directly by CTMC, which serves as the conduit to produce and/or procure and provide requested information. DHS Intelligence recently assigned a liaison officer to the Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans to enhance the identification of DHS and interagency intelligence information necessary to inform policy, including on domestic terrorism.

The DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) leads the execution of Incident Community Coordination Team (ICCT) national calls in response to incidents of national significance. The focus is to provide information about available federal resources including infrastructure protection, non-profit security grant programs, active shooter training, and mechanisms to communicate and coordinate with the appropriate federal agencies. These calls are open to stakeholder organizations and agencies nationally, includes Federal, state, and local partners, as well as faith-based community partners. CRCL has recently activated ICCT calls following the attack on the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, PA, the attacks on Mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, and the attacks in Sri Lanka.

Through the Department's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), participants on these calls receive information on risk mitigation solutions that are available to address a wide range of attack methods. CISA Protective Security Advisors also engage directly with owners and operators of facilities, including places of worship, schools, commercial facilities, and others to conduct vulnerability assessments and support the enhancement of security procedures to better position facilities to mitigate the impacts of an attack, or prevent them altogether.

I would like to conclude by again assuring the Committee that DHS remains focused on protecting the American people against the threat from domestic terrorism and violence in all forms. I am proud of the work that is performed by DHS Intelligence professionals in this space, and the contribution we make every day to the difficult work our Federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial partners perform in combatting this threat. Thank you for your time, and I look forward to our discussion on this critical topic.