



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hearing Statement of Transportation & Maritime Security Subcommittee Ranking Member Shri Thanedar (D-MI)

Evaluating High-Risk Security Vulnerabilities at our Nation's Ports

May 10, 2023

Last month, we had the opportunity to meet with port operators, including from the Port of Detroit in my district, regarding the security of our nation's maritime ports. Today, I am eager to hear from our witnesses about how federal agencies work together to protect our ports and safeguard the free flow of commerce. More than 99 percent of America's cargo from overseas arrives by maritime port. That represents billions of dollars of goods moving through ports each and every day.

It is vital for our national security and our economic future that we invest in protecting our seaports from attacks. American and foreign ports have been victims of cyberattacks that have halted the movement of goods and cost millions of dollars. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic led to many challenges for ports across the nation, including staffing shortages, supply chain issues, and massive backlogs of goods awaiting processing. Today, the maritime industry has made great progress to increase cyber protections and recover from backlogs. But more can be done.

I am eager to hear more about the Coast Guard and CISA's efforts to expand cybersecurity measures at U.S. ports. Now is the time to invest in cyber readiness across essential transportation industries, as more cyber attacks on our ports and transportation systems could have devastating consequences.

I am also interested to learn how the Coast Guard and TSA work together to administer the Transportation Worker Identification Credential, or TWIC program. Workers are the most valuable assets our ports have, and ensuring they can be vetted and receive credentials in a timely manner is critical to maintaining efficient and secure operations at our ports.

The U.S. Coast Guard, CISA, and TSA must work together to safeguard America's maritime ports. We in Congress must support that mission and deliver the resources needed to invest in critical security advances. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today about what they need to carry out their missions effectively.

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