

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Statement of Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson*****The President's FY 2012 Budget Request  
for the Department of Homeland Security***

March 3, 2011 (Washington) – Today, Committee on Homeland Security Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) delivered the following prepared remarks for the full Committee hearing entitled “The President’s FY 2012 Budget Request for the Department of Homeland Security”:

“While I am keenly interested in the programs and plans that the Secretary has in mind for the next fiscal year, there are two potentially devastating developments—outside this budget request—that demand attention.

First, there is the matter of the Fiscal Year 2011 budget. The 112th Congress has not produced any of the 12 appropriations bills needed to fund this government. Instead, to keep the government operating, the House Leadership has chosen to keep “kicking the can down” with Continuing Resolution after Continuing Resolution.

H.R. 1, as approved by the House, would reduce funding for the Department of Homeland Security by 1.1 billion dollars or 3 percent in the middle of the fiscal year. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle have consistently emphasized the business community’s need for “predictability” and “certainty.” Yet this same principle does not seem to extend to the public sector and the operations of government. Surely, DHS has a right to expect some “predictability” and “certainty” as it pursues its counter-terrorism and homeland security activities.

Turning to my second concern, there is the very real threat that funding for DHS operations for next year—fiscal year 2012—will plunge to 2006 levels. My staff prepared an analysis of how DHS’s Fiscal Year 2012 budget will be negatively impacted by H.R. 408—the bill put forward by the Republican Study Committee.

The picture it presents is potentially devastating to the Department. DHS’s budget would be cut by 10.7 billion dollars.

This proposal would mean that Customs and Border Protection would lose 3 billion dollars. Over 8,200 border patrol agents and 2,800 CBP Officers would have to be let go. It would require that the Federal Air Marshals budget be cut by 20 percent—jeopardizing the security of the flying public. Our efforts to address one of the nation’s greatest threats—cyber attacks from rogue nations, terrorists, and lone wolf actors—will be severely hampered. NPPD, the home of DHS’s cybersecurity operations, will be cut by \$275 million.

The Coast Guard, which protects our nation’s waterways, rescues boaters in distress, and was the first to respond to the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, will have to eliminate over 2,700 positions.

The list goes on and on. I invite those who have an interest in this analysis to go to my website. Madame Secretary, we all have a stake in DHS getting the resources it needs to keep the homeland secure. The President also recognizes the importance of DHS’s role.

Even in these austere budgetary times, under the President’s budget, DHS will receive a slight increase. That said, I do have some questions about the proposal to make significant cuts to first

responder grants. I also want to hear from you about the proposed cuts to University Programs.

Before I yield back, I would like to note—for the record—my deep concern that H.R. 1, the Continuing Resolution approved by the House, could create the kind of budgetary sinkhole that will swallow many of the quality proposals you are here to present.”

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