

STATEMENT OF RANKING MEMBER JACKIE SPEIER (D-CA)
Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence

“The DHS Intelligence Enterprise – Past, Present, and Future”

June 1, 2011 at 2:00 PM

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding today’s hearing on the Department of Homeland Security Intelligence Enterprise. I look forward to working with you to continue this Subcommittee’s long history of oversight over the critical mission to coordinate the intelligence and information sharing activities of the Department.

This Enterprise brings together the intelligence capabilities of the entire Department—from headquarters, to the Office of Intelligence and Analysis, to analysts in the field working in the various components.

We are here to examine the progress the Intelligence Enterprise has made since its creation and to identify areas needing improvement.

Although we have come a long way to shore up intelligence gaps within the Department, several incidents over the past few years have revealed vulnerabilities, and driven home the importance of maturing the Intelligence Enterprise.

Does DHS have the funding it needs to continue building its intelligence architecture? Does it have the buy-in from the intelligence community and senior leadership across the government?

The Chief Intelligence Officer of the Department, Under Secretary Caryn Wagner, leads the DHS Intelligence Enterprise, and I am pleased that she is with us today to discuss how the Enterprise is maturing. Some challenges the Chief Intelligence Officer and the Intelligence Enterprise face appear deceptively simple – like developing a common lexicon for all intelligence professionals to use Department-wide.

Other challenges seem more complex – like bringing together components with distinct and sometimes competing priorities to serve the Department’s large customer base.

To what extent is intelligence analysis and information sharing a priority in each component? How is the Department reducing duplication and redundancy of effort within DHS and between DHS and other elements of the intelligence community? How much money should we be devoting to this, and can it be done better and more efficiently?

I am looking forward to hearing from all of the intelligence chiefs assembled here today to get answers to these questions, and to see how all of you work together in this constrained budget environment to address the many threats to our homeland security.

Documents combed through in the aftermath of the Bin Laden operation have underscored how critically important it is for all of the components, even with their unique missions, to work together.

Letters attributed to Bin Laden and his lieutenants have identified targets in major cities from coast to coast and we know Al Qaeda was looking at our rail, aviation, and energy sectors.

Do we have the right policies in place to permit the sharing of sensitive information, while also protecting the privacy and civil liberties of US citizens? Do we have the right technologies to allow the components to adequately communicate with their partners within DHS and in the Intelligence Community, as well as state, local, and tribal partners and the private sector?

After this hearing, we expect to have a much better picture of the accomplishments and current capabilities of the DHS Intelligence Enterprise and, more importantly, how we can help you address your critical needs and meet your goals for the future.