<u>**Ranking Member William R. Keating (D-MA) Opening Statement, as prepared**</u>
**COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY**
**SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT, INVESTIGATIONS & MANAGEMENT**

***"Denying Terrorist Safe Havens: Homeland Security's Efforts to***
***Counter Threats from Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen"***

10 a.m., Friday, June 3, 2011
311 Cannon House Office Building

The terrorist attacks of 9/11 were coordinated from a safe haven in Afghanistan.

The 9/11 Commissioners later stated that the U.S. "strategy should include offensive operations to counter terrorism." And "terrorists should no longer find save haven where their organizations can grow and flourish."

Terrorism is America's number one security threat.

Denying safe haven to terrorists is paramount to our homeland security and an important step in keeping our communities safe from terrorism. We know that safe havens exist in ungoverned, under-governed, or ill-governed areas around the world.

These havens provide terrorists with cover and allow them the space and opportunity to plan vicious terrorist attacks.

There are multiple agencies that play a role in implementing U.S. counterterrorism efforts.

The Departments of State, Homeland Security, Justice, and Defense are but a few U.S. Government agencies that combine their efforts in countering this threat.

I am interested in hearing from our witnesses the level of cooperation that presently exist among the various agencies and whether this multi-agency approach is producing positive results for our homeland security.

I am concerned that Congress has not yet received a full and comprehensive listing of our Government's efforts, especially in light of the risk safe havens pose to the safety and security of U.S. interests at home and abroad.

One hand needs to know what the other hand is doing and the production of this report, in the manner intended by Congress, will allow that to happen.

While today's focus is on physical safe havens, we must also consider the broader safe havens of the future.

Electronic infrastructure and global communications play an important role in terrorist operations and allow for virtual safe havens that are much harder to track, disrupt and dismantle than physical safe havens.

Furthermore, the May 1st killing of Osama bin Laden -- who escaped detection by hiding in a "safe haven" located in a heavily populated, governed area -- indicates that the term safe haven does not always equate to remote, scarcely populated, lawless areas.