NEWS ALERT

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Homeland Security Committee

Rep. Bennie G. Thompson, Ranking Member

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement of Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

Examining the Homeland Security Impact of the Obama Administration's Cybersecurity Proposal

June 24, 2011 (Washington) – Today, Committee on Homeland Security Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) delivered the following prepared remarks for the Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Security Technologies subcommittee hearing entitled "Examining the Homeland Security Impact of the Obama Administration's Cybersecurity Proposal":

"When President Obama released his Cyberspace Policy Review almost two years ago, he declared that the "cyber threat is one of the most serious economic and national security challenges we face..."

I agree with him and I am pleased that his Administration has taken significant steps to put forth a clear path to update our cyber security laws.
I am also pleased we are examining the President's proposal here today.

This Committee is the lead on cybersecurity in the House, as it should be, and we have been examining this issue and calling for action since our formation.

I re-introduced my cybersecurity bill, H.R. 174, in January of this year with the continuing hope that it might get a hearing in this Committee.

Frankly, the White House proposal we are examining today has used many of the concepts I suggest in my legislation.

We are facing a national and global challenge on cybersecurity, and we must be internationally engaged to make improvements.

Simply put, we must figure out how cyberspace is to be governed, and how it is to be secured. We know that decisions being made by international bodies that govern the Internet do not necessarily reflect U.S. national interests.

Major corporations, financial firms, government agencies, and allies have all been victims of cybersecurity breaches, and these are just the events we know about.

Classified military networks have been penetrated by foreign intelligence agencies, and from the perpetrators' perspective, no one has ever been punished for any of these actions. This is not a record of success.

Since 1998, we have repeatedly tried a combination of information sharing, market-based approaches, public private partnership and self-regulation in an effort to strengthen our cyber defenses.

Hopefully, we are learning from the shortcomings of the past and preparing for future challenges."

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