

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Statement of Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson*****Building One DHS: Why Can't Management Information Be Integrated?***

March 1, 2012 (Washington) – Today, Committee on Homeland Security Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) delivered the following prepared remarks for the Oversight, Investigations, and Management subcommittee hearing entitled “Building One DHS: Why Can't Management Information Be Integrated?”:

“We are today to discuss the integration of the Department of Homeland Security’s management functions and examine whether there is room for improvement. When the Department was created in 2002, it was the largest reorganization and consolidation of government agencies, personnel, programs, and operations since the creation of the Department of Defense in 1949, some fifty-three years earlier.

Twenty-two different agencies, many with management challenges of their own, were combined into one. These agencies brought with them aged financial management systems, cumbersome acquisition policies, and inconsistent human capital policies.

Since that time, the Department has made efforts to build these disparate operations into one seamless system so that the thousands of men and women that work every day to secure our Nation will have the proper administrative and management functions they need to operate on a daily basis.

When FEMA enters into a contract with a vendor for one amount, and then CBP enters into a contract with the same vendor for the same product for a different amount, that’s a problem. If those contracts were combined, money could be saved.

When a TSA human resources manager has to log out and log into three different systems to determine (1) time and attendance records; (2) current salary; and (3) training attendance for one employee, that’s a problem. Combining these systems into one can save time, reduce errors and streamline bureaucracy.

When an employee that works for the Chief Financial Officer has a meeting with an employee that works for the Chief Information Officer and has to travel thirty minutes to get to the meeting location, that’s a problem. Consolidating the Department’s headquarters into one location will reduce costs, travel time and create a more harmonious environment among the Department’s personnel.

Fortunately, as reflected by the President’s FY 2013 budget request, the Department has come a long way in streamlining its efforts and under new initiatives intends to go even further.

The new Human Resource Information Technology program, in addition to plans to finalize existing Data Center consolidation efforts, and the new strategy for financial modernization are all steps in the right direction. If fully funded, these programs will go a long way in improving the Department’s integration efforts.

I look forward to hearing testimony from Under Secretary Borrás on additional Department plans and strategies and from our witnesses from the Government Accountability Office and the Officer of the Inspector General on improvements that have been made in the last three years and recommendations for future progress.”

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