

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Statement of Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson*****Authorizing Customs and Border Protection and Immigration and Customs Enforcement***

April 8, 2014 (Washington) – Today, Committee on Homeland Security Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) delivered the following prepared remarks for the Border and Maritime Security subcommittee hearing entitled “Authorizing Customs and Border Protection and Immigration and Customs Enforcement”:

“I would like to thank Chairman Miller and Ranking Member Jackson Lee for holding this hearing, which I understand is setting the groundwork for a possible markup of H.R. 3846, the United States Customs and Border Protection Authorization Act, and H.R. 4279, the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement Authorization Act.

In general, I support authorizing these important DHS components, particularly because neither CBP nor ICE is authorized in law in its current form.

Instead, the law still contemplates the agencies as they were over a decade ago, when the former U.S. Customs Service, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and other agencies with border security and immigration missions were brought together under the Department of Homeland Security by the Homeland Security Act of 2002.

Much has changed since that time. The missions of the agencies continue to evolve. The threats they face are ever-changing. And the number of CBP and ICE personnel and programs continue to grow.

I look forward to hearing from Members and witnesses today about what they believe needs to be included in legislation authorizing CBP and ICE.

I suspect that Members on both sides of the aisle have a great deal to say about these authorization bills, particularly absent the opportunity to consider comprehensive border security and immigration legislation to date in the 113th Congress. I believe this hearing, and a possible subsequent markup, will allow the Subcommittee to have its say on these important issues.”

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