

# Ranking Member Yvette D. Clarke (D-NY) Opening Statement

## Joint CIPST Subcommittee Hearing “Strategy and Mission of the DHS Science and Technology Directorate”

Tuesday, September 9, 2014, at 10 a.m.  
311 Cannon House Office Building

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Thank you Chairman Meehan and Chairman Bucshon for convening this Joint hearing on the Science and Technology Directorate, and I want to especially welcome Ranking Member Lipinski and our colleagues from the Subcommittee on Research and Technology. Dr. Brothers, it is good to see you back before this Subcommittee, and Mr. Maurer, thank you for agreeing to give us your perspective, and we are pleased to have you here today.

S&T is an essential component of the Department’s efforts, and I know many of us are eager to hear about a new vision and priorities at the Directorate. The mission of the S&T Directorate is to strengthen America’s security and resiliency by providing innovative science and technology solutions for the Homeland Security Enterprise.

In order to meet the needs of its diverse stakeholders who cover all DHS mission areas, S&T strives to rapidly develop and deliver knowledge, analyses, and innovative solutions that advance the mission of the Department.

S&T also leverages technical expertise to assist the efforts of the DHS Components to establish operational requirements and to select and acquire needed technologies. The ultimate goal of S&T, as I see it, is to strengthen the Homeland Security First Responders’ capabilities to protect the homeland and respond to disaster.

Along the way, S&T must help foster a culture of innovation and learning across DHS that speaks to challenges with scientific and technical rigor. In 2009, spurred by the findings of several reports about S&T, especially one performed by the National Academy of Public Administration, this Subcommittee initiated its own year-long comprehensive review of the Directorate.

Our purpose was to identify areas within the Directorate that could use a fresh set of eyes and additional oversight or modifications to legislative authorities. As a result, we produced a comprehensive, bipartisan bill, which passed the House unanimously in 2010.

In doing so, we reviewed the Homeland Security Act and the Department’s use of the authorities the Congress has vested in it. I am hoping that some of the things we learned during that process can be used in future authorization efforts.

One of the things we did learn was that with such a large and complex portfolio, the Directorate has found it difficult to craft a cohesive strategy. Our analysis suggested that the Department had not developed a clear risk-based methodology to determine what research projects to fund, how much to fund, and how to evaluate a project’s effectiveness or usefulness. These questions remain today.

In my opinion, the directorate will never achieve success unless research rules and metrics are more fully established, and I am anxious to hear of any plans that the Under Secretary may have in mind to keep the Directorate moving forward during these challenging times.

Striving to do more with less is always the hallmark of an efficiently run effort - of any type - but trying to protect our citizens and nation with programs that are backed by underfunded and depleted science and technology research assets, is another matter.