

***Statement of the Ranking Member Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ)***  
***Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency***

**Hearing: “Assessing DHS’ Performance: Watchdog Recommendations to Improve Homeland Security”**

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Thank you Mr. Chairman for holding this important hearing today. I look forward to working with you during the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress to ensure that the Department of Homeland Security has the direction and resources it needs to perform its critical mission as efficiently and effectively as possible.

I also extend my gratitude to our distinguished panel of witnesses for appearing before the Subcommittee today.

During the hearing, I will be especially interested to hear the witnesses’ perspectives on the impact a lapse in funding for Department of Homeland Security would have on DHS’ ability to implement the recommendations we will be discussing.

Given that the Department endured the challenges of a lapse in funding less than two years ago and the dangers another shutdown of DHS would pose to our nation’s security, I sincerely hope that my Republican colleagues will realize the error of their ways and pass a full year funding measure for the Department without strings attached. The women and men who so ably work for the Department deserve guarantees that they will continue to be compensated for their service on behalf of our nation.

To that end, I am eager to hear from Inspector General Roth regarding what happens to his audit staff that produce recommendations that result in savings for the taxpayer in the event of a lapse in funding for the Department.

Regarding recommendations and DHS’ progress, I also look forward to hearing from Inspector General Roth regarding how the number of open, unresolved recommendations, decreased from 691 to 94 between 2011 and 2014, and how the improvement corresponds to the Department’s proactive interactions with the Office of the Inspector General.

I look forward to hearing from Ms. Gambler regarding GAO’s assessment of the Department’s improvement in the areas of greater commitment by its senior leadership, and the implementation of a corrective action plan to address its longstanding management issues.

I, as I know my colleagues on the Committee are, am committed to seeing that DHS’ management functions are removed from GAO’s high-risk list. Ms. Gambler and her team have provided the road map for DHS to be removed from the high-risk list. It is now up to the Department to implement the reforms and policies we know are needed.

It is also up to Congress to provide the Department the funds and support necessary to stay on track. Given Dr. Gerstein’s recent opinion piece in *Politico*, I am eager to hear him share his views on how the Department can build on the success of its response to Superstorm Sandy in 2012.

I am also interested in hearing Dr. Gerstein’s perspective on the Secretary’s Unity of Effort Initiative and what he believes Congress can do to aid the Department in its mission.

With that Mr. Chairman, I thank you again for holding this hearing today and for not letting a little bit of snow delay our work.