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Markup Opening Statement

Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection and Security Technologies

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The legislation to be considered reflects bipartisan agreement in many areas. By putting politics aside and coming together, we send a strong message to the Department.

The threats facing our nation are constantly evolving. Within DHS, it falls to the S&T Directorate to help ensure that the right decisions are made about research activities to address these risks. The bipartisan S&T bill that we will consider today puts the Directorate on a path to do just that.

Given the challenging budgetary environment, where DHS, like all agencies, have to absorb across-the-board cuts and withstand the threat of another government shutdown, it is all the more important that the Department prioritize scarce research dollars on areas with the greatest promise of delivering tangible benefits to DHS operations.

Additionally, one thing that both sides of the aisle can agree on is that the private sector, particularly small business, is the lifeblood of innovation. I take every opportunity to say that S&T must do a better job of communicating the Department's technology needs to the private sector so that solutions can be developed. I am pleased that the bipartisan S&T bill places an emphasis on fostering better communication with the private sector.

It also emphasizes more collaboration between S&T and the Department's components, such as Customs and Border Protection, TSA, and the Coast Guard.

Secretary Johnson, as a part of his Department-wide "Unity of Effort" initiative, directed S&T to partner with operational components in Integrated Product Teams, or IPT's to improve research and development decision-making and technology acquisitions.

The IPT system of review and assessment is still in its early stages but has the potential of transforming how DHS does R&D. Today, I intend to offer an amendment to the bill to support the Secretary's efforts.

Mr. Chairman, turning to the other measures under consideration today, I would commend you for introducing H.R. 3490, legislation that recognizes the work that the Secret Service does to train state, local, and tribal officials on how to investigate and prevent cyber and electronic crime.

I am also pleased that we will be considering a bill to authorize the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office's "Securing the Cities" program.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for working with me to ensure timely consideration of my bill, H.R. 3510. It directs DHS to develop a Department-wide strategy to carry out its multi-faceted cybersecurity mission. These are valuable bills that the Subcommittee has invested much time and effort, and with any luck, will further the Department's efforts to make the nation more secure.