

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Statement of Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson*****Making DHS More Efficient: Industry Recommendations to Improve Homeland Security***

September 18, 2015 (Washington) – Today, Committee on Homeland Security Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) delivered the following prepared remarks for the Subcommittee on Oversight and Management Efficiency hearing entitled “Making DHS More Efficient: Industry Recommendations to Improve Homeland Security”:

“The Department of Homeland Security’s mission is broad and all-encompassing-- from aviation security to border security, emergency preparedness, cyber security, critical infrastructure protection and counterterrorism. As the Department moves forward, it must do so in an efficient manner that makes wise use of human capital, technology and financial resources.

Given the past acquisition failures at the Department, it is imperative that some best practices and new ideas be employed to ensure that taxpayer dollars are not wasted. I appreciate Secretary Johnson’s push to improve the Department’s acquisition and planning efforts through his Unity of Effort initiative.

The private sector can also offer an example to DHS on how to manage some of its business practices. The private sector’s ideas should be considered with an eye toward ensuring that homeland security capabilities are not diminished. Private sector goals - earning a profit- and government goals- providing services and protecting to the public - are vastly different, yet interdependent.

In order to successful, effective channels of communication between Government and the private sector are required, including engagement with small and under-represented businesses. Small businesses are leaders in innovation and drivers of the economy. They hold more patents than all of the nation’s universities and largest corporations combined, and create two-thirds of all private sector jobs, employing half of all working Americans.

I would appreciate hearing from witnesses how DHS can better engage the innovation, efficiency, and competitiveness exemplified every day in small and minority businesses. Also, I would appreciate hearing from the witnesses how DHS can better engage its workforce. Surveyed employees feel that there is a lack of diversity throughout the components and they opine that promotion potential within the Department is few and far between. DHS cannot achieve Unity of Effort without buy-in from its employees. I want to hear what private sector best practices can be used at the Department to improve its workforce.”

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