



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Joint Hearing Statement - Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)  
*Threats to Space Assets and Implications for Homeland Security*  
Emergency Preparedness, Response & Communications Subcommittee  
March 29, 2017**

I represent the Second Congressional District in Mississippi. Over the past 15 years, my district has experienced devastating floods and debilitating tornadoes and has even survived the impact of Hurricane Katrina. Unfortunately, there is no indication that these storms are letting up – in fact, these weather events may end up becoming increasingly frequent and severe.

More and more, the people in Mississippi and along the Gulf Coast will rely on satellite technology to forecast the path of dangerous storms, inform evacuation activities and routes, and strategically pre-position assets for disaster response. In the aftermath of storms, satellites will provide surge capacity capabilities for emergency communications, and can improve connectivity in rural environments.

Given the increasingly prominent role that satellite assets play in our ability to prepare for and respond to disasters, I will be interested in understanding the extent to which the impact of threats to satellite assets are understood by the emergency management community, and the degree to which disaster response plans take into account those threats.

Outside of disasters, commercial satellite assets are important to a range of industries – from banking and agriculture to transportation and broadcasting. As we have witnessed over the past year with Russia's use of cyberattacks to interfere with the 2016 Presidential election, our adversaries are pursuing novel methods of attack in an attempt to undermine our confidence in our economy, our democracy, and ultimately, our way of life.

Certainly, an attack on satellite assets could result in an overwhelming degree of disruption. I will be interested in understanding how threats to space assets – from both State and non-state actors – are communicated to State and urban area fusion centers as well as relevant commercial sectors, and to what degree we are in a position to mitigate potential vulnerabilities. I will also be interested in understanding the full range of threats posed to space capabilities, and what actions Congress should be taking to protect against them.

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Media contact: Adam Comis at (202) 225-9978