

***Statement of Rep. Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)  
Ranking Member, Committee on Homeland Security***

***In support of H.R. 4005, the Gauging American Port Security  
Act (GAPS Act)***

***June 26, 2012***

This bill, authored by Representative Janice Hahn, a member of the Committee on Homeland Security, would require the Secretary of Homeland Security to conduct a study of the gaps in port security in the United States.

The study, which will be submitted to Congress, must set forth a prioritization of those security gaps and a plan for addressing them.

Finally, the bill would require the Secretary of Homeland Security to share relevant port security information, as appropriate, with Federal, State, and local government partners as well as port owners and operators, who are involved in protecting ports.

Given the importance of America's ports and waterways to our Nation and economy, they are an attractive target for terrorists and criminals.

The impact of a terrorist attack on a major port would be catastrophic, with massive economic losses in addition to probable loss of life.

By requiring a comprehensive assessment of port security vulnerabilities and a plan for addressing them, we will be one step closer to making our ports, and our Nation, more secure.

Our Nation's ports are as diverse as the people they serve. The importance of this infrastructure to the global supply chain cannot be overstated.

Enactment of H.R. 4005 will help ensure that our limited security resources can be targeted to those threats that put our ports at greatest risk.