

News From \_\_\_\_\_

U.S. Senator  
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**OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR ROBERT C. BYRD (D-W.Va)  
CHAIRMAN  
SENATE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE  
ON HOMELAND SECURITY  
FEBRUARY 24, 2010**

Good afternoon. I call the Subcommittee to order.

Secretary Napolitano, you lead a Department of 219,000 men and women who are on the front line every day protecting our citizens. We commend those employees for their service and we welcome you to the Subcommittee today. I also welcome Senator George Voinovich, our Ranking Member. I look forward to working with all of our Subcommittee Members this year.

Secretary Napolitano, I thank you for your service to the Nation. You took on a Department with many challenges. We share the common goal of working to secure the homeland, while striving to protect the rights and liberties that our founding fathers enumerated in the Constitution.

Recently, you submitted to the Congress the first Quadrennial Homeland Security Review, a Strategic Framework for a Secure Homeland. The Review lays out a thoughtful strategy that details five core missions for the Department. These five missions are very similar to the missions that the Committee approved last year. Now it is our responsibility to put into place the resources necessary to accomplish those missions.

Quoting from the Strategic Framework, “We have learned as a Nation that we must maintain a constant, capable, and vigilant posture to protect ourselves against new threats and evolving hazards.”

As I review the details of the President’s budget, I find significant gaps between the mission assignments stated in the Strategic Framework and the resources requested in the President’s Budget. The Budget includes a modest increase of 2.6 percent for the Department, with most of the increases provided to the Transportation Security Administration in response to the December 25<sup>th</sup>, attempted attack on Northwest Airlines flight #253. While the proposed increases for checkpoint explosives technology and additional Federal Air Marshals may be appropriate, it is an example of responding to the latest threat, rather than anticipating future threats.

The Fiscal Year 2011 budget does not request the resources necessary to allow the Department to be nimble in responding to known vulnerabilities as well as to future threats. The President proposes to reduce funding critical to maintaining the ability of the Coast Guard to secure our ports, interdict illegal migrants and illegal drugs, and to save lives. The Budget proposes to reduce the number of Border Patrol agents, and reduce our ability to secure containers shipped from overseas. The budget proposes status quo funding levels for programs that address known vulnerabilities, such as cyber security, bio-terrorism, port security, and transit security.

Last year, with your leadership, the President requested significant resources for homeland security and I was pleased that Congress sent him a bipartisan bill that the President signed in October. I look forward to working with you again this year. I hope that we will have your support in identifying ways to improve upon the fiscal year 2011 budget so that necessary resources are available to meet the mission requirements established in your Strategic Framework.

Finally, I appreciate the Department's efforts through FEMA, to help my State as West Virginian's dig out from the tremendous amount of snow that has fallen this year. I support Governor Manchin's request for Federal assistance in response to the December snow storm, and I look forward to working with you to ensure the February storms that packed a one-two punch are handled appropriately.

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