

**Statement of
Senator Susan M. Collins**

“Ten Years After 9/11: Is Intelligence Reform Working?”

May 12, 2011

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I would like to thank our distinguished panel for being here today. We have an impressive line-up indeed: former Representative Jane Harman, one of the authors of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act. Representative Harman worked closely with Senator Lieberman and me in crafting the 2004 reforms; John Gannon who has had a stellar career in the Intelligence Community having served as the Deputy Director of Intelligence at the CIA and Chairman of the National Intelligence Council; and, Michael Hayden whose extraordinary service includes his tenure as the First Principal Deputy Director of National Intelligence and the Director of both the CIA and NSA.

Last week’s welcome news that Osama bin Laden was killed demonstrates the kind of successful collaboration of intelligence and operations that we envisioned in reforming our capabilities and intelligence community in the wake of the attacks of 9-11-01.

This is a great victory for our intelligence efforts and a great blow to al Qaeda. But al Qaeda is not going away.

That is why it is time for Congress to examine and build on the successes that emanated from the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act, identify any shortcomings, and work to correct them.

Our 2004 law created the Director of National Intelligence and the National Counterterrorism Center to foster information sharing and collaboration among our security partners.

The DNI has made concrete progress integrating the 17 agencies and departments in the intelligence community. Let me give just two examples of how that integration is taking place:

In 2008, the DNI rolled out the innovative “A-Space,” which is an intelligence analyst’s Facebook. But instead of social networking, our intel experts are posting, sharing, and asking each other about topical issues. They can collaborate with colleagues across agencies and around the world, allowing them to share leads and resources more easily than ever.

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I also am pleased that the National Counterterrorism Center has created “pursuit teams” that map terrorist networks, track threats using information from across intelligence agencies to bridge the gaps between national and domestic intelligence, and put pieces of the intelligence puzzle together.

These are just two examples of innovative ways stovepipes have been broken. Given the influx of intelligence analysts who joined the IC after 9 - 11, I am hopeful that this new generation is less wedded to the silos of the past. I believe that the more senior managers also are embracing the increased collaboration and information sharing that have helped prevent numerous attacks during the past decade. The arrests of Najibullah Zazi and David Headly were just two of many cases where we have connected the dots.

On the other hand, this Committee concluded in our investigation on the Fort Hood shootings that the DoD and the FBI collectively had sufficient information to have detected Major Hasan’s radicalization to violent Islamist extremism, but that they failed act effectively on the many red flags signaling that he had become a potential threat.

Almost 10 years since September 11 and seven years since our landmark legislation, we are safer but not yet safe. Our intelligence community is stronger and more effective than ever before, but plenty of turf battles remain.

To help address these and other deficiencies in the IC, the DNI must be the quarterback that the 9-11 Commission envisioned and we intended. In this Administration, however, there is the potential for the DNI to be trumped by unconfirmed czars, who are not accountable to Congress but enjoy extraordinary power and proximity to the President.

At our earlier oversight hearing, the leaders of the 9-11 Commission, Governor Kean and Congressman Hamilton, agreed that John Brennan is, in many respects, performing the role we envisioned for the DNI when we authored the legislation. That troubles me, not due to any doubts about Mr. Brennan’s capabilities, but because that structure undermines the statutory role of the DNI.

We must ask whether changes to the law are required, or whether more fidelity to the 2004 law is the answer to realizing the potential of the DNI.

The successful operation against bin Laden opens the door to another challenge. How can we make the most of what is reported to be a treasure trove of information found at the compound? The agencies scrubbing and analyzing the data must work together and build a bridge between foreign

leads and domestic leads. If the American intelligence community uses the data found to its fullest, more terrorists will be captured or thwarted, and Americans will be more secure.