

Opening Statement of Chairman Thomas R. Carper

**“Lessons Learned from the Boston Marathon Bombings:
Preparing for and Responding to the Attack”
July 10, 2013**

As prepared for delivery:

A little less than three months ago, the city of Boston suffered a horrific terrorist attack during the 117th Boston Marathon. The attack claimed the lives of three observers and injured nearly 300.

As the events of April 15th unfolded, we wrestled with the fact that we were witnessing the first successful terrorist bombing on US soil since the September 11th terrorist attacks. Just as we did in the aftermath of 9/11, we must learn from the Boston Marathon bombing. That is why this committee has set out to unearth the lessons-learned from this act of terrorism. At a future time, this committee will look at whether this tragedy could have been prevented. However, today's hearing will focus on the emergency response to the events that occurred on April 15, 2013.

We will examine the preparations made by the city of Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to deal with a crisis of this nature. We will also assess how the city, state and federal government responded once Boylston Street was rocked by the two homemade explosives.

For more than a decade, our country has worked to promote effective emergency response systems that help cities and states to mitigate the effects of a terrorist attack. In the years since 9/11, we have learned that it takes preparation, training, effective leadership, and a coordinated response plan to minimize the impact and devastation caused by disaster.

By all accounts, Boston had many of these elements in place on April 15th. Lives were saved as a result. Today's hearing will take a step toward identifying the lessons-learned from the preparedness for and response to the Marathon attacks. We will look at what worked, what could have gone better, and how what happened in Boston can help prepare communities across the country to deal effectively with emergencies.

To help shed light on the lessons-learned from the attack, we have with us three key officials who were on the ground the day of the attack. We are also joined by an emergency management expert who has studied the response to the Marathon bombing.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses and working with them in the coming weeks and months to strengthen our preparedness and response systems across the U.S.

###