

**Chairman Johnson Opening Statement**  
**“The Homeland Security Department’s Budget Submission for Fiscal Year 2017”**  
**Tuesday, March 8, 2016**

*As submitted for the record:*

I would like to thank Secretary Jeh Johnson for appearing before the committee to discuss the president’s fiscal year 2017 budget request for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

Consideration of the department’s budget is an important task for this committee. The economic and national security pressures facing the United States are extraordinary. Today, the national debt stands at \$19 trillion — over 100 percent of our gross domestic product.

Yet threats to the homeland are ever present. Malicious actors seek to undermine us by encouraging homegrown violent extremism, waging cyberattacks, attacking critical infrastructure, and trafficking narcotics and people across the border — to name just a few of the domestic challenges we face.

To address these multiple threats, the department is requesting a total budget authority of \$66.8 billion for FY2017, an increase of \$506.3 million over its FY2016 authority. Of this request, \$47.3 billion would come through appropriations, \$1.9 billion less than what was appropriated in FY2016.

Two key areas, cyber- and border security, have high priority in the budget request.

The department has requested \$745.9 million to continue its implementation of its flagship cybersecurity programs: Einstein and Continuous Diagnostics and Mitigation (CDM). In an example of what Congress can do when we set aside our differences and find areas of common agreement, last December, Ranking Member Carper and I passed important legislation to authorize and improve these programs as part of the Federal Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015.

On border and immigration, the department has provided slightly increased funding for Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Several new programs in the budget are certainly of interest to the committee. For example, it is vital that we understand how the department is coordinating with other agencies through the new Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Task Force, and how the new CVE grant program will operate.

Additionally, the Coast Guard has requested \$150 million to accelerate plans for a new heavy icebreaker to operate in the Arctic. We want to ensure this mission is necessary and adequately planned and that funds starting to flow to the new icebreaker acquisition will be spent effectively.

In this tight budget environment, the department has certainly had to make some tradeoffs. As we dive into the budget, I hope the secretary is able to speak to several areas of potential concern for me and the committee.

One issue is the department's decision to raise several fees, primarily at the Transportation Security Administration, by over almost \$1 billion to offset shifts of appropriated funds elsewhere within the department. The TSA would have essentially no direct benefit from the increase. This decision comes at a time when Administrator Neffenger is trying to improve agency operations and security.

The committee also wants to hear more about the department's proposal to reduce federal grants through the Federal Emergency Management Agency by \$642.1 million — cuts that primarily would be made to mitigation and homeland security grants.

Lastly, we want to hear what steps the department will be taking in the coming year to address ongoing management issues in acquisition, human capital and financial management. We would like to understand the department's next steps toward improvement.

Again, I thank the secretary for joining us this morning, and I look forward to our discussion.