

Chairman Johnson's Opening Statement
"Resources and Authorities Needed to Protect and Secure the United States"
Wednesday, March 4, 2020

As prepared for delivery:

I want to thank Acting Secretary Chad Wolf for being here today to describe and provide the rationale for the President's Fiscal Year 2021 budget request for the Department of Homeland Security. This year's budget request equals \$75.9 billion, a reduction of \$12.5 billion from last year's enacted total of \$88.4 billion. The primary variances from last year include a reduction of \$12.3 billion for FEMA's Disaster Relief account for Major Disasters, a savings of \$2.4 billion in transferring the Secret Service back to the U.S. Treasury Department, and an increase of \$2.5 billion to provide additional resources to ICE and CBP as they continue to deal with unacceptably high levels of illegal immigration. I'm sure these proposals will be topics for robust discussion.

In addition to these budgetary issues and priorities, the Department of Homeland Security plays a central role in addressing other current threats and security issues. Our committee will be holding a hearing tomorrow on the challenges we all face in dealing with the growing Coronavirus outbreak. But today, we will want to hear Mr. Wolf's assessment of the current situation and his plan of action to deal with it.

Throughout society, computer systems and networks are increasingly under attack from state and non-state cyber criminals. The Department's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, or CISA, partners with federal departments and agencies, state, local, tribal, territorial governments, and the private sector to protect their mission-critical systems. To enhance these efforts, Senator Hassen and I introduced the Cybersecurity Vulnerability Identification and Notification Act of 2019, which provides CISA with the limited legal authority to identify the owners or operators of potentially compromised critical infrastructure systems to provide them notice of these vulnerabilities. I look forward to the committee considering this needed authority at our legislative mark-up next week.

Additionally, CISA provides security assessments and advisory services to the sixteen critical infrastructure sectors of our economy. For all but one sector in which CISA has oversight, CISA employs a common approach by using voluntary Protective Security Advisors. In 2006, Congress authorized a specific regulatory program for the Chemical sector — the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards program (CFATS). CFATS is set to expire in the coming weeks, and the administration proposes to transfer CFATS Chemical Security Inspectors into the same voluntary system used for the other critical infrastructure sectors. I support this common sense approach, but am willing to work with industry, the administration, and congressional colleagues on a path forward we can hopefully all agree on.

I thank Acting Secretary Wolf for his willingness to serve in this capacity at a critical time for the Department, and I look forward to discussing the resources and authorities the Department needs to protect the homeland.