

**Statement of
Senator Susan M. Collins**

**Nomination of Rand Beers to be Under Secretary of the National
Protection and Programs Directorate at the Department of
Homeland Security**

**Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
June 2, 2009**

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**I join the Chairman in welcoming Rand Beers as the
nominee to be Under Secretary of the National Protection
and Programs Directorate, or NPPD, at the Department of
Homeland Security.**

**As the Chairman has indicated, the scope and
importance of the NPPD's responsibilities are daunting.
NPPD is charged with:**

- ensuring successful implementation of the
chemical-facility security program that was
authorized in 2006 due to the work of this**

Committee – a program that will need to be re-authorized this year;

- assessing risks to our nation's critical infrastructure;
- leading DHS's effort to protect our nation against Improvised Explosive Devices and working to combat terrorists' use of explosives in the United States; and
- protecting the nation's cyber networks.

This last responsibility – cybersecurity – is both critical and complex. The complexity arises not just from the technical nature of the issue, but from the disjointed approach the federal government has taken. In the course of the coming months, cybersecurity responsibilities across the federal government will be

debated as we consider the Administration's plan and alternative legislative proposals.

DHS's relationships with the critical infrastructure sectors that both provide for and rely on information technology services will remain invaluable in ensuring a coordinated defense against cyber attacks. I look forward to hearing from Mr. Beers about how, if confirmed, his management of DHS cybersecurity efforts will be affected by the White House's new cybersecurity initiative.

NPPD also manages programs that benefit components across the Department, including the US-VISIT program that screens the biometrics collected from visitors to the United States against immigration and criminal databases. US-VISIT has been struggling for years with implementing a solution to collect biometric

information on foreign travelers departing the country – a responsibility that is required by law.

Should Mr. Beers be confirmed, these are just some of the critical challenges awaiting his leadership and expertise.

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