

**Nomination of Jane Holl Lute
for Department of Homeland Security Deputy Secretary**

Senator Joe Lieberman

March 26, 2009

Good morning and welcome to the nomination hearing of Jane Holl Lute to be Deputy Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security. Welcome, Mrs. Lute. We're happy to have you before us today.

Mrs. Lute, you have outstanding credentials, a remarkable professional history, and broad national security and management experience, all of which is more than ample training for the position to which you have been nominated.

You have earned five educational degrees - including a PhD and a law degree – have had a distinguished career in the military, served as the European specialist at the National Security Council during the first Bush and Clinton Administrations, and spent three years as a professor at West Point.

As Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations for the past several years, you have managed a large and complex Peacekeeping

workforce, with responsibility for hundreds of thousands of military and civilian personnel in over 30 countries, including hotspots such as Kosovo, the Congo, and Darfur, to name just a few. This was no small accomplishment. Your leadership has helped to ensure the security and welfare of people around the globe living in unaccommodating and hostile circumstances.

Managing the Department of Homeland Security is also a demanding job, which, much like the U.N., requires a smart and steady hand. The Deputy Secretary post carries with it diverse responsibilities that range from overseeing preparations to respond to a nuclear terrorist attack to ensuring that DHS employees have adequate office space.

As you know, the Department of Homeland Security has struggled to gain solid footing over the course of its short life. Each year it becomes stronger, I am happy to note. And I don't think there is any question that the country is safer as a result of the Department's efforts.

But the Department has a difficult and varied mission and its work is central to the security of all Americans. So, we must continue to press forward to improve upon its capabilities.

I am working to draft the Senate's first authorization bill for the Department as a means of laying out what I believe should be its priorities and to make the Department more efficient and effective in its missions. Needless to say, we will be seeking input from the Administration.

I do want to take a moment to mention a couple of my greatest concerns. One of the biggest problems the Department faces is its management of acquisitions. Some of the Department's largest and most troubled acquisition programs – Deepwater, SBINet, radiation detection portal monitors – need stronger oversight and more decisive leadership than they have gotten in the past.

Furthermore, the Department's heavy reliance on contractors to perform basic services raises serious questions about whether DHS is building sufficient internal capacity and institutional knowledge. Right now, DHS still has insufficient capacity to develop requirements and evaluate the technical feasibility of contractors' proposals. I look forward to hearing your plans for improvement in this area.

The Department's new initiative to strengthen the security of federal information technology systems – the Comprehensive National Cybersecurity Initiative – is another project critical to the security of the American people that I have been overseeing with great interest. Given the Administration's emphasis on transparency, I hope you will encourage increased openness and information sharing with Congress, the private sector, and the American public on this key project to ensure that it is a success.

Clearly, as the Administration's announcement and the Secretary's travel schedule this week indicate, southern border security has become a central focus for the Department. I intend to request additional resources and personnel for Customs and Border Protection and Immigration and Customs enforcement to help stem the flow of drugs and people moving north into the U.S. and guns and money moving south into Mexico. I look forward to a close collaboration with the Department in this area.

As you know, there are many other challenges facing the Department that must be met and conquered if DHS is to succeed in its

ultimate mission of protecting the nation from terrorism and natural disasters. This Committee has always worked cooperatively with the Department and will continue to do so to ensure its success.

If confirmed, you will play a large part in setting the Department on course to overcome these challenges. Again, thank you for your many years of service, and I hope you will serve your nation for many more.