

**Opening Statement of Chairman Joseph I. Lieberman  
on the Nomination of Grayling G. Williams  
to be Director, Office of Counternarcotics, DHS  
December 10, 2009**

Good morning and welcome to our hearing today during which the Committee will consider the nomination of Grayling Williams to be the Director of the Office of Counternarcotics Enforcement (CNE) at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

I want to note at the outset that after we consider Mr. Williams' nomination, the Committee will move immediately to consider the nomination of Elizabeth Marie Harman, who has been nominated to be Assistant Administrator for the Federal Emergency Management Agency in charge of the Grants Programs Directorate.

Let's begin with the Office of Counternarcotics Enforcement. It was created by the Homeland Security Act of 2002 and strengthened by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, the so-called 9/11 Commission legislation – both of which I am proud to say came out of this Committee. The idea was to create an office to coordinate the counternarcotics policies and operations of DHS' many component agencies and to coordinate policy with other federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to halt the flow of illegal drugs into the United States.

CNE is responsible for recommending appropriate levels of financial and personnel resources within DHS to address the drug trafficking threat and works very closely with the Joint Terrorism Task Forces (JTTF) to track and sever connections between illegal drug trafficking and terrorism.

Frankly, the office, in my opinion, has never been more vital to the mission of homeland security than it is today. As this Committee learned in a set of hearings earlier this year that focused on violence on the southern border, the FBI has labeled the Mexican drug cartels as the number one organized crime threat in the American today. The cartels have used the cash and guns they transport south across the border to declare war on the Mexican government, which has led to a series of brutal attacks on Mexican officials, including beheadings and mass murders.

If this level of violence against a government occurred elsewhere in the world we would quickly call it terrorism. And I think that's exactly what the cartels have become: narco-terrorists. The Mexican government, led by President Calderon, has taken courageous and unprecedented steps to take on the cartels and to strengthen and re-impose the rule of law. But, despite the Mexican government's best efforts, the level of violence in Mexico is still much too high: DHS is projecting a 40 percent increase in drug cartel-driven murders in Mexico this year and that is over the very high levels we saw last year.

Mr. Williams, if you are confirmed, you will be a key player in our efforts to combat the threat of drug trafficking. You will have to work tirelessly to strengthen our defenses against

increasing levels of drug-related violence along our southern border, but also the growing level of sophistication in the tactics used by drug traffickers. For example, the cartels are exploiting a loophole in our money laundering laws that allows drug traffickers to use stored value cards to launder their drug profits. I hope you will work with us to ensure that this loophole is closed, should you be confirmed.

Mr. Williams I believe is exceedingly well qualified to take on these challenges after a 23-year career at the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). Since 2008, he has served as Chief of Staff to the Chief of Operations at DEA, following earlier tours of duty as Section Chief /Assistant Special Agent in Charge at DEA Headquarters Operations Division and numerous policy and supervisory positions at DEA over the past two decades. Before all that work, he received a degree from the University of New Haven in 1977, and began his career on the Yale University police force before joining the DEA as a special agent, serving in New Haven, Hartford, and Bridgeport, Conn.

So, I welcome you before the Committee and I look forward to hearing your statement and your plans if confirmed.

Senator Collins?

**Opening Statement of Chairman Joseph I. Lieberman  
on the Nomination of Elizabeth M. Harman  
to be Assistant Administrator, FEMA, DHS  
December 10, 2009**

Good morning and welcome to our hearing on the nomination of Elizabeth Marie Harman to be Assistant Administrator for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in charge of the Grant Programs Directorate.

Ms. Harman has drawn support from a truly impressive array of leaders from the first responder community, a number of whom are here today. I would like to acknowledge my good friend, Harold Shaitberger, the head of the International Association of Fire Fighters, and I see representatives here from the International Association of Fire Chiefs, as well.

Ms. Harman's nomination is endorsed by many leading first responder organizations in addition to the IAFF and the IAFC, including the National Association of State Fire Marshals, the National Fire Protection Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Association of Police Organizations, the National Sheriffs' Association, and many individual leaders in the field of first response and emergency medical service.

The Grant Programs Directorate (GPD) and the position of Assistant Administrator in charge of grant programs are a result of changes made by the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006, which this Committee authored. Our goal was to create a new, stronger FEMA by bringing together the Department's mission to prepare for natural and man-made disasters with its mission to respond to those same disasters.

Homeland security grant programs were a key part of the preparedness mission, and the new FEMA was to include a "one-stop shop" for grant assistance to help state and local governments and first responders prepare for natural disasters or terrorist attacks.

The Assistant Administrator for the Grant Programs Directorate is responsible for these grant programs. If confirmed, you would fully administer about 20 of them to help prepare state, local, and tribal governments, first responders, and nonprofit sector organizations for acts of terrorism and natural disasters through training and equipping police, fire fighters, and other first responders; and through better security at our ports and transit systems. And you would be responsible additionally for the financial management of another 30 or so grant programs that assist victims post disaster and help communities mitigate against potential damage from future disasters.

So, this is a wide-ranging job with big responsibilities. Your strengths are as big as the responsibilities of the office. That begins with the fact that you have been a firefighter and a paramedic and therefore has what we call "boots on the ground" experience. You understand from first-hand experience that proper preparation and sufficient resources are keys to helping first responders perform their jobs effectively. You know the value of all-hazards training, in other words, training for predictable emergencies such as fires and floods, as well as for

unpredictable emergencies, such as terrorist attacks. You understand where federal grants are being spent, where they should be spent, and the value of consulting first responders before spending decisions are made.

Since 2005, Ms. Harman has been the director of the Hazardous Materials and Weapons of Mass Destruction training program within the IAFF. She has held exercise and emergency medical training positions at the University of Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute, the Johns Hopkins University Medical School, and George Washington University. As I mentioned, she began her career as a fire fighter and EMT in Bowie, Maryland, and Fairfax, Virginia.

Ms. Harman graduated from George Washington University in 1997 with a degree in Emergency Medical Services Management and in 2006 received a Master of Science in Emergency Health Services from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. So you bring quite an impressive background into play.

If confirmed, she will face a number of challenges over the next few years, the most serious of which will be the need to do more with less. Under the assumptions set out in the FY10 budget, by 2014 the department will be faced with a 13 percent budget cut in real terms from its current funding level.

We on this Committee will work hard to turn those projections around but resources are inevitably going to be tight, and grant funding is likely to be at or below current levels. Performance measurement, for example, will gain in importance as resources must be focused on programs that work.

In both the Post-Katrina Act and the 9/11 Act of 2007, we put in various measures to ensure that grant funds are spent effectively. Many of these requirements, however, have not yet been met, and I look forward to your closing that gap.

Senator Collins?