



Prepared Roundtable Remarks

**Ms. Elaine Duke
Deputy Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security**

Before the

**United States Senate
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**

Regarding

**Reauthorizing DHS: Positioning DHS to Address
New And Emerging Threats to the Homeland**

February 7, 2018

Opening Remarks
DHS Deputy Secretary Elaine Duke
DHS Authorization Roundtable before the
Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
February 7, 2018

- Since the Department was first authorized in the Homeland Security Act of 2002, DHS has been on the frontlines of the government’s efforts to secure and protect our nation.
- But the world has changed since 2002, in geopolitics, technology, and the threats we face.
- Terrorists now communicate through cell phone apps and social media—challenges we couldn’t foresee in 2002.
- To best protect the United States and its citizens, we need updated authorities, updated support, and updated accountability for the world we live in today.
- It is time to ensure that the 240,000 DHS employees who work tirelessly to protect the nation have the tools they need to carry out our mission.
- Senate passage of a DHS Authorization Act is critical to our Homeland security and mission success.
- We need legislation that codifies the Department’s top initiatives and positions DHS to better fulfill our complex missions, while ensuring the Department has the flexibility it needs to adapt to evolving threats as time goes on.
- I commend the House of Representatives for passing legislation in July 2017 to modernize the Department’s organization and authorities—the first significant overhaul of the Department’s authorities since the Department’s inception.
- The House-passed bill provides critically important authorities for the Department’s components, including:
 - the Federal Emergency Management Agency,
 - the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services,
 - the U.S. Coast Guard,
 - the Transportation Security Administration, and
 - the U.S. Secret Service.

- It also formally authorizes U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement for the first time.
- The bill also empowers the men and women who protect our nation to better carry out their wide-ranging missions.
- It allows us to study disaster preparedness and response, so we can find ways to help communities recover faster, in a more cost-effective way.
- It improves the Department's information sharing capabilities, so our state, local, tribal, and territorial partners can stay up to date on the threats facing our communities, in both the cyber and the physical world.
- And it recognizes the importance of the Department's functional lines of business' authority to provide appropriate oversight and leadership of critical mission-enabling functions.
- I welcome the opportunity for DHS to work with the Committee to shape this legislation, to make sure we get the best bill possible for our homeland and the American people.
- If Congress were to pass a bill, it would underscore to the American people Congress's commitment to prioritize securing the Homeland, while affirming the importance of the DHS mission to the men and women charged with carrying out that mission every day.
- Therefore, the Department strongly urges the Committee to act swiftly and report a strong bill for consideration by the full Senate.
- Further, I encourage the Senate to pass a DHS Authorization Act.
- DHS looks forward to working with the Committee as it moves forward with its bill.
- I thank the Members of this Committee for their attention to this important effort.