

JAMES R. LANGEVIN  
2D DISTRICT, RHODE ISLAND

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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-3902**

**The Honorable James R. Langevin**  
**Opening Statement**

**“The Future of Science and Technology at the Department of Homeland Security”**  
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WASHINGTON OFFICE:  
109 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-2735  
FAX: (202) 225-6976

DISTRICT OFFICE:  
THE SUMMIT SOUTH  
300 CENTERVILLE ROAD, SUITE 200  
WARWICK, RI 02886  
TELEPHONE: (401) 732-9400  
FAX: (401) 737-2982

[james.langevin@mail.house.gov](mailto:james.langevin@mail.house.gov)  
[www.house.gov/langevin](http://www.house.gov/langevin)

Good afternoon. I'd like to welcome everyone to today's important hearing on the future of science and technology at the Department of Homeland Security. I'd like to begin my opening remarks by thanking Under Secretary Jay Cohen for his leadership at the Science and Technology Directorate. You have brought a great deal of direction and stability to the organization, and I commend you for your efforts. I'd also like to commend the thousands of dedicated people – from the program managers within your Directorate to the scientists and researchers throughout our country – who are working on homeland security research and development projects that will secure our nation for the future. Your work is greatly appreciated.

In a bipartisan fashion over the course of the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, this Subcommittee has spent a great deal of time working with Under Secretary Cohen and the Department to create a sound foundation for research and development efforts that will protect our homeland. I fully concur with the Under Secretary's focus on what he calls “The Four P's” – getting the people, the processes, the partnerships, and the product right will ensure that the S&T Directorate achieves enduring success. Establishing this organizational structure is critical given the unique historical moment in which we find ourselves. Because the Department of Homeland Security has never before experienced a presidential transition, it is more important than ever that those “Four P's” are in place.

Today, with our eye on the future, I look forward to discussing two sets of issues with the Under Secretary. The first are immediate concerns – the Homeland Security Institute (HSI) and the Homeland Security Science and Technology Advisory Council (HSSTAC), both of which are set to sunset at the end of this year. We have been conducting a review to determine whether this Committee should re-authorize a Federally Funded Research and Development Center (FFRDC) for homeland security. While HSI has taken steps toward developing some core competencies, I see little compelling evidence that HSI has progressed sufficiently towards achieving core competency in specific areas of interest to DHS, or that HSI has become a fully functional studies and analysis FFRDC. Before this Committee decides to reauthorize HSI, I'd like you to provide us with a comprehensive review justifying the need for the FFRDC, including information and data about the metrics with which S&T will assess HSI progress, efficiency, and effectiveness. We also need assurances that there will be an open competition for the next contract.

I have similar questions about the use of HSSTAC, which is also set to expire at the end of the calendar year. For several years, this advisory committee lay dormant. The Under Secretary

resurrected it in 2007 to do a report on improvised explosive devices (IEDs), but I am unsure how the Department sees its future. I hope we can discuss these issues today. The second set of issues includes long term policy concerns. And while I believe that the Under Secretary has done a great deal to strengthen the foundation of the Directorate in his year and a half on the job, much work remains.

I think the organization's biggest challenge is to get the prioritization of research and development right. At the Under Secretary's last appearance in June 2007, we spent some time discussing the S&T strategic plan. At the time, I was critical of the strategic plan because it looked more like a business or organizational document, rather than a strategic document.

In December 2007, S&T submitted a document called "Coordination of Homeland Security Science and Technology," which is a compilation of science and technology requirements, gaps, and strategic goals, as well as agency roles, responsibilities, accomplishments and ongoing activities, taken from a variety of existing strategies, plans, and directives. Though I believe this is a useful document, I was hoping for more specifics. This document provides no estimates of budgetary or resource requirements and provides overviews of programs rather than details of program content. It doesn't describe the process that was used to identify particular topics as an appropriate focus. It also neglects to discuss nuclear threats, which is a curious absence. In fact, the document gives no indication of the relative importance of the ten chapter topics. It lists short, mid, and long term priorities, but doesn't suggest if we should work on these goals sequentially or simultaneously.

I hope that the Quadrennial Homeland Security Review process will provide an opportunity to strategically assess the value of the many initiatives underway. Perhaps this is a better format for the Department to address these concerns. So while I want to congratulate the Under Secretary on his efforts thus far, it's clear that we're still missing quite a bit of direction here.

I believe that a future S&T Directorate must: clarify a role for risk assessments in prioritizing research projects; develop or further define metrics for success and failure of projects; obligate funds in a more timely fashion; enhance transparency of project selection; further define roles and uses of national laboratories and centers of excellence; enhance relationships with the DOE National Laboratories by allowing competition for both long term and short term R&D money; improve responsiveness to industry and develop processes by which industry can become more aware of opportunities at S&T; better define technical requirements; and establish a robust procurement operation within the S&T Directorate.

Just as getting the "Four P's" right was an important first step to ensuring organizational success, getting these issues right will ensure that the S&T Directorate at DHS will continue to generate products that protect this nation. I thank Under Secretary Cohen for working with this Committee, and I look forward to our continued relationship in the future.