

NEWS ALERT



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Homeland Security Committee

Rep. Bennie G. Thompson, Chairman



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement of Chairman Bennie G. Thompson

“Countering the Nuclear Threat to the Homeland: Evaluating the Procurement of Radiation Detection Technologies”

March 14, 2007 (Washington) – Today, Committee on Homeland Security Chairman Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) delivered the following prepared remarks for the Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity and Science and Technology Subcommittee hearing entitled “Countering the Nuclear Threat to the Homeland: Evaluating the Procurement of Radiation Detection Technologies”

“I believe that a committee’s most critical function is conducting oversight. I salute you and your subcommittee for diving right into these issues.

The gravest threat facing this nation is a nuclear attack, and so I am here to commend the hard work of the men and women in the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office and thank Director Oxford for being here today.

But I am extremely troubled by some of the things that I’ve read about DNDO’s cost-benefit analysis. Our investigative arm – the GAO – will testify today that DNDO cannot justify spending \$1.2 billion to purchase and deploy radiation detection technology.

Why? According to the review, the DNDO used incomplete and unreliable data. They projected inaccurate performance data upon a program to get the results that they wanted. DNDO relied on potential future performance to justify the purchase of the ASP monitors. In one case, they assumed future performance would be over five times better than what the tests showed. But “potential” can’t justify our investment. We need to have proof of performance.

We have to be able to look the American people in the eye and tell them that we are doing everything we can to make sure that we have the best technologies deployed.

And make no mistake, I’m talking about this Committee as well as the Department. I view us as partners and I hope everyone recognizes that we are all doing the best we can to protect the country, and the Administration and the Congress both have responsibilities here.”

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