

**Opening Statement of
Senator Susan M. Collins
Chairman, Homeland Security and Governmental
Affairs Committee**

**Nomination Hearing of
Paul A. Schneider
to be
Undersecretary for Management
Department of Homeland Security**

December 6, 2006

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Today, the Committee will consider the nomination of Paul Schneider to be Undersecretary for Management at the Department of Homeland Security.

The mission of DHS is to provide a unifying core of leadership and expertise for the national network of organizations and institutions that work to secure our nation and to prepare for and respond to disasters of all types.

The Management Directorate is responsible for ensuring that the Department's workforce has the resources and systems in place to carry out this vital mission. The Directorate works in a variety of critical areas from human resources and administration, to budgeting, procurement, and information technology.

The collective aim is for DHS components to have effective means of working with each other, and with their homeland-security partners at the state and local levels.

In addition to its responsibilities for allocating human and material resources, the Directorate is charged with identifying and tracking performance measurements throughout the Department.

This would be a daunting assignment under the best of circumstances. In our current situation, the phrase “herding cats” comes to mind.

As the Department of Homeland Security nears the end of its fourth year of operations, the unifying core has not fully taken shape. As the Committee’s investigation of Hurricane Katrina made so terribly clear, the goals of effective resource allocation and coordination across all levels of government continue to elude us. Grant programs remain mired in conflict and controversy. The right balance between safe and secure borders, and the lawful movement of people and commerce, has yet to be realized.

To be sure, progress is being made on all of these fronts, but not at the pace our times demand.

The Committee's hearing this morning on the enormous waste, fraud, and abuse plaguing the recovery from Katrina provided a stark reminder of what is at stake. As the reform and strengthening of FEMA within DHS moves forward, the need for effective resource allocation will become ever more urgent - as will the need for solid and verifiable performance measures.

The Management Directorate will need a strong hand at the helm. Paul Schneider appears to bring strong credentials to this challenge.

He began his career in public service in 1965 at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, in my home state, as a project engineer. He was appointed to the Senior Executive Service in 1981 and served as the deputy director of NAVSEA'S Auxiliary Systems Sub-Group.

He later served as the executive director and senior civilian of the Naval Sea Systems Command and as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition. In 2002, he became the Senior Acquisition Executive of the National Security Agency. Most recently, Mr. Schneider served as a defense and aerospace consultant.

He holds a degree in nuclear engineering, and has been recognized with distinguished civilian service awards from the Department of Defense, the Navy, and National Security Agency, as well as various Presidential Rank Awards.

I welcome Mr. Schneider to the Committee and look forward to his testimony today.

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