

Statement of
Senator Susan M. Collins

On the Nominations of
Robert D. Jamison
to be Under Secretary for the DHS National Protection and
Programs Directorate, and
W. Ross Ashley III
to be Assistant Administrator
of the Federal Emergency Management Agency

Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee
November 8, 2007

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The nominations we consider today encompass two critical responsibilities at the Department of Homeland Security: management of the federal programs that protect our citizens from natural or man-made disasters, and administration of the grant programs that help states and localities improve their ability to counter terrorist attacks, respond to natural disasters, and communicate in emergencies.

The scope and importance of the NPPD's responsibilities are daunting. The NPPD is charged with:

- maintaining the Office of Bombing Prevention as a strong and active participant in the nation's efforts to counter the threat of terrorists using improvised explosive devices on our soil;**
- ensuring successful implementation of the chemical-facility security program authorized last year, due to the work of this Committee;**
- assessing risks and developing prioritized inventories of our nation's critical infrastructure, and**

- **managing voluntary private-sector coordination programs to achieve the goals of the National Infrastructure Protection Plan.**

I would note that the Office of Bomb Prevention would be formally established and strengthened by the National Bombing Prevention Act that Senator Lieberman and I introduced last week.

The second nomination is to a position within FEMA that plays a vital role in preparing our state and local first responders to handle the next major natural disaster or terrorist attack.

The FEMA reform legislation that Senator Lieberman and I crafted in 2006 restored preparedness grant programs to FEMA. This improved the agency's ability to support state and

local preparedness with funds for planning, training, exercises, and interoperable communications.

Grants are a vital part of our essential goal of achieving effective capabilities and coordination among federal, state, local, and other stakeholders in the preparation and response to natural disasters and terrorist attacks. As part of that effort, I would add, the Grant Programs Directorate has another critical role: ensuring that tax dollars are not wasted.

Ross Ashley comes before our Committee with a long record of executive experience in both commercial and non-profit organizations.

I join the Chairman in welcoming both of these nominees to this hearing.

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