

STATEMENT OF SENATOR GEORGE V. VOINOVICH
MAY 24, 2006
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Hearing to Consider the Nomination of
Paul Schneider
to be Under Secretary for Management, Department of Homeland Security

Thank you, Madam Chairman, for holding this important hearing. The Under Secretary for Management at the Department of Homeland Security serves as the principal administrator and manager for the Department. Though the Under Secretary for Management does not serve on the frontline, the position is critical to our nation's homeland security. With the Department still in its formative years, the Under Secretary for Management must provide consistent direction and coordinate numerous interrelated management systems so they complement the operational components' activities. The guidance must be flexible and durable over time, and eliminate stovepipes that continue to hinder development of a unified culture.

As my colleagues know, the *Homeland Security Act of 2002* initiated the federal government's largest restructuring since the creation of the Department of Defense in 1947. While carrying out its critical mission of securing the nation from terrorism and natural hazards, the leadership of DHS must be mindful of the major organizational, operational, and cultural issues associated with large mergers. It is indeed a challenge to unify 180,000 employees from 22 different federal agencies and programs.

It is not meant as a criticism of the Secretary or any single individual at DHS to acknowledge the fact that the Department faces significant hurdles as it matures. The Department must be honest about its management challenges, and must devote focused, high-level attention to overcoming them. I am concerned that DHS continues to face a high rate of vacancies and turnover in key leadership positions, including within the Management Directorate. This issue could be further complicated as this Administration finishes its elected term.

As the Chairman of the Oversight of Government Management Subcommittee, improving the management focus at DHS remains one of my top priorities. During my long career in public service, including as a Mayor and Governor, I have repeatedly observed that the path to organizational success lies in adopting best practices in management, including strategic planning, performance and accountability measures, and effectively leveraging human capital.

When instituting reforms as Mayor and Governor, individuals tasked with implementation would tell me, "We don't have time for Total Quality Management, we are too busy putting out fires." I appreciate that DHS is also busy putting out fires. But the connection between good management practices and operational success should not be lost. That is why the position of Under Secretary for Management is so vital to the success of the Department of Homeland Security.

Mr. Schneider, if confirmed, your job will be to tackle the formidable management challenges at the Department of Homeland Security and institutionalize long-term changes that will last beyond your tenure.

After reviewing your significant experience in senior management positions at the Department of Defense and the National Security Agency, I believe you are well qualified for the position of Under Secretary for Management. I appreciate your willingness to return to federal service and make a contribution to our nation's homeland security, and applaud your courage in accepting this nomination and the challenges it brings.

Mr. Schneider, I look forward to learning of your vision for fulfilling the duties of the Under Secretary for Management. If you are confirmed, this Committee will be closely monitoring your progress. We will also help ensure you have the necessary visibility and leverage within the Department to get the job done. Accordingly, I encourage you to be as candid as possible with us about the Management Directorate's resource needs and concerns. Thank you, Madam Chairman.