



**One Hundred Eleventh Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20515**

April 17, 2009

The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Thompson:

We are in receipt of the copy of your letter to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano about the DHS Assessment entitled, "Rightwing Extremism: Current Economic and Political Climate Fueling Resurgence in Radicalization and Recruitment." We appreciate your initiative in seeking critical information about this report.

We agree with you that terrorism can come from the left or the right and DHS should focus on specific, actionable intelligence to counter the terrorist threats to our Nation. We also note that your letter reinforces the fact that the privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties issues surrounding this assessment are much more than just "Washington spin."

While your letter raised questions about the process regarding the dissemination of products from the Department's Office of Intelligence and Analysis, our ongoing internal review has shown that the Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties did, in fact, weigh in on the report and voiced several concerns about its contents. We are advised that while the Office of Intelligence and Analysis made changes to the report based on this input, not all of the recommended changes were included prior to dissemination of the report. This intra-departmental disconnect is disturbing, and is an issue that must be addressed immediately by the Secretary.

While we understand DHS officials are scheduled to brief the Committee on Homeland Security a week from now, due to the serious implications raised by the report, we request that a full committee hearing be held on this issue at the earliest opportunity. Because an Under Secretary of Intelligence and Analysis has yet to be named, we request that you invite Secretary Napolitano to testify, along with the DHS Chief Privacy Officer and a representative from the DHS Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties. A second panel could include representatives from the privacy and civil liberties community, along with those for national veterans' organizations.

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We look forward to working with you in a bipartisan manner to conduct thorough oversight into this important matter. Thank you for your time and consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



PETER T. KING
Ranking Member



MARK E. SOUDER
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Border, Maritime,
and Global Counterterrorism



DANIEL E. LUNGREN
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Emerging
Threats, Cybersecurity, Science and
Technology



MIKE ROGERS
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Emergency Communications,
Preparedness, and Response



MICHAEL T. MCCAUL
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Intelligence,
Information Sharing and
Terrorism Risk Assessment



CHARLES W. DENT
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation Security
and Infrastructure Protection



GUS M. BILIRAKIS
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Management,
Investigations, and Oversight