



**Statement of Chairman Bennie G. Thompson
“Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Act of 2008” Mark-Up
March 6, 2008 – 11:00AM**

Thursday, March 6, 2008 (WASHINGTON) – At 11am today, the Committee on Homeland Security met to mark-up a Committee Print “to amend the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to extend, modify, and recodify the authority of the Secretary of Homeland Security to enhance security and protect against acts of terrorism against chemical facilities, and for other purposes.” The print is known as the “Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Act of 2008.” Congressman Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS), Chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security, released the following prepared remarks:

“Today, we will be considering a bipartisan Committee Print to extend and strengthen the Department of Homeland Security’s authority to regulate chemical security. This legislation needs to be enacted to ensure that there is no lapse in our efforts to protect the Nation’s chemical infrastructure from the threat of terrorism.

“Shielding our Nation’s critical infrastructure from foreign and domestic terrorism is one of the 8 stated goals in my plan of charting the course towards freedom from fear.

“Extending DHS’ authority to regulate chemical security is the right thing to do and this legislation does it the right way. A lot of work has gone into this legislation to make sure that it is the product of extensive discussions with the Department, industry -- both large and small chemical facilities, fertilizer manufacturers, petroleum and propane manufacturers and distributors, water and wastewater facilities, environmental groups, and labor organizations.

“Subcommittee Chairwoman Jackson-Lee and Ranking Member Lungren have also made major contributions and are to be commended for their efforts. Together, we have managed to work through some very complicated issues including: State preemption, assessments for inherently safer technologies, and how to help water and wastewater facilities as we bring them under the chemical security law.

“There are a couple of lingering issues that I know Members want to explore in amendments but we have a good bill and I am confident that, in the end, we will have a legislative product that we can all support.

“I know that once this bill leaves this Committee there will be an effort to weaken it. However, we should not allow narrow interests to interfere with the homeland security imperative of securing our chemical security sector from terrorists. Securing our chemical sector against terrorism will make America more secure and bring about freedom from fear,” said Rep. Thompson.

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