

NEWS ALERT



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Homeland Security Committee

Rep. Bennie G. Thompson, Chairman



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement of Chairman Bennie G. Thompson

“Building a Partnership Strategy: Improving Information Sharing with State & Local Law Enforcement and the Private Sector”

May 25, 2007 (Washington) – Today, Committee on Homeland Security Chairman Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) delivered the following prepared remarks for the Intelligence, Information Sharing, and Terrorism Risk Assessment Subcommittee field hearing entitled “Building a Partnership Strategy: Improving Information Sharing with State & Local Law Enforcement and the Private Sector”:

“Last year, I authored a report entitled The Law Enforcement Assistance and Partnership also known as the “LEAP” report. This was a first step in putting together the best ideas gathered by my staff from local law enforcement officers across the country. I often refer to these people as the “boots on the ground” and they have had a terribly difficult time convincing the Federal government that their information needs are not being met.

This is the second in a series of field hearings designed to give local law enforcement a chance to state for the record their information sharing needs. Last month in a field hearing in Los Angeles, Chief Bratton made it a point to mention two initiatives specifically from the LEAP report. Those two initiatives include the National Center for Intelligence-Led Policing and the Vertical Intelligence Terrorism Analysis Link or “VITAL”. If enacted, these two initiatives would go a long way towards fulfilling a need that simply has not been addressed.

I am also pleased to welcome representatives from the Seattle private sector to this field hearing. I have found that we often forget the needs of the private sector which owns or operates 85% of the critical infrastructure in this country. Simply put, information sharing must eventually go beyond just local law enforcement and help the private sector to determine its vulnerabilities and how to address them.”

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