



Committee on
HOMELAND SECURITY
Chairman Michael McCaul

Opening Statement

June 25, 2015

Media Contact: Susan Phalen
(202) 226-8477

**Statement of Chairman Michael McCaul (R-TX)
Committee on Homeland Security**

**Markup: H.R. 158, H.R. 455, H.R. 998, H.R. 1634, H.R. 2786, H.R. 2127,
H.R. 2750, H.R. 2770, H.R. 2843, and H.R. 1073**

Remarks as Prepared

Today we are marking up 10 national security bills that will better protect the U.S. homeland. Among other improvements, these bills are designed to close gaps in transportation security and defend the territorial integrity of our Nation.

Americans are worried, and rightfully so. They believe the government has let down its guard at our airports and at our borders—and that our enemies have taken notice.

For instance, in recent weeks Americans have seen a flurry of news stories exposing missteps made by TSA and highlighting potential vulnerabilities in airport security screening.

It's been nearly 14 years since 9/11, yet it appears we are still struggling with the basic building blocks of transportation security. This is unacceptable. Bombs should not be able to slip through screening, and individuals with terrorist ties should not become TSA employees. Period.

This Committee takes the issue seriously, which is why we have decided to move swiftly to markup bills to eliminate transportation security gaps so that Americans can continue to fly with confidence.

We are also marking up bills today designed to confront threats at our Northern and Southern Borders and to strengthen the Visa Waiver Program to keep terrorists and criminals outside of our country.

It is important that Congress put tougher measures in place to keep dangerous goods and people from slipping into America because this Administration has not done nearly enough. In fact, the White House policy of porous borders and the glaring lack of a border strategy are a daily invitation to criminals and extremists.

The American people are demanding that we do more, and today the Committee has a chance to show that we are listening.

Finally, I want to note that today I will be dropping a bill on countering violent extremism, which I hope the Committee will be able to mark up soon. This bill will create in law—for the first time—a dedicated office in the U.S. government for combating domestic radicalization.

It will be a bold step in reversing the tide against terrorists who have seeded their propaganda in our communities, and it will lay the groundwork for more aggressive action to keep Americans from being recruited by violent radicals.

Before we begin, I want to note that earlier this week the House passed a handful of crucial bills that were reported out in bipartisan fashion by this Committee. You should all be proud of your work on this legislation, and I hope our close cooperation as a Committee will continue today on the bills before us.

With that, I thank the Members and staff who have put the time and effort into these bills. I look forward to seeing them approved by the Committee—and ultimately moved through Congress and signed by the President.

###