

September 11, 2014

The Honorable Michael McCaul
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security
United States House of Representatives
H2-176 Ford House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman McCaul:

In advance of the upcoming Rule X hearings for reorganization for the 114th Congress, we are writing to recommend the streamlining and consolidation of Congressional oversight of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. This is a matter of critical importance to national security on which there is broad bipartisan agreement, and it remains the only major recommendation of the 9/11 Commission that ten years later has not been acted upon.

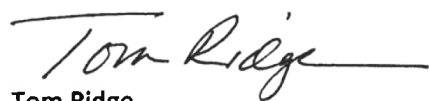
Last year, members of the Sunnylands-Aspen Institute task force – including former 9/11 Commission co-chairs Tom Kean and Lee Hamilton, Rep. Loretta Sanchez, and former Reps. Howard Berman, David Dreier, and John Tanner – recommended that:

- Congress should significantly reduce the number of committees with jurisdiction over homeland security and consolidate primary oversight of the key DHS component agencies under one committee in the House and one in the Senate, with coordinated jurisdiction.
- DHS should have an oversight structure that resembles the one governing other critical departments, such as the Department of Defense and Department of Justice. (In the 112th Congress, DHS answered to 92 Congressional committees and subcommittees and 27 additional caucuses, commissions and groups – three times the number overseeing the Defense Department.)

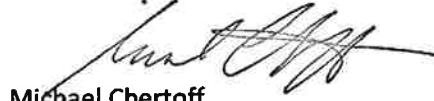
We believe that the current structure of the authorizing committees in the House of Representatives for the Department of Homeland Security should be revised as follows:

- (a) Primary jurisdiction over authorization matters for DHS should vest in the House Homeland Security Committee;*
- (b) Jurisdiction over authorization in intelligence matters within the purview of DHS should be shared between the House Homeland Committee and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence;*
- (c) Jurisdiction over authorization in matters relating to immigration should vest in the House Judiciary Committee;*
- (d) Jurisdiction over authorization in matters now vested with the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee should remain status quo until a new Chair for the Committee assumes that role, at which point its jurisdiction should end;*
- (e) All other current jurisdictions should end.*

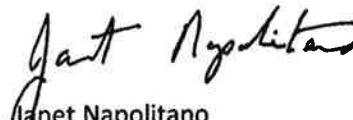
Sincerely,



Tom Ridge
Former Homeland Security Secretary



Michael Chertoff
Former Homeland Security Secretary



Janet Napolitano
Former Homeland Security Secretary

cc: The Honorable John Boehner, Speaker of the House
The Honorable Pete Sessions, Chairman, House Committee on Rules
The Honorable Richard Nugent, Member, House Committee on Rules