



## News Release

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Thornberry Condemns Attack, Calls for

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Establishment of U.S. Homeland Security Agency

http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/tx13\_thornberry/Septembereleventh.htm

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. Rep. Mac Thornberry (R-TX) today condemned yesterday's terrorist attack on America and called for the establishment of a National Homeland Security Agency to help the federal government better prevent and respond to threats against our home.

"Yesterday was a day without adjectives," Thornberry stated. "There is no fitting way to properly describe the shock, horror, grief, and anger we all felt watching the tragic events unfold. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the victims and their families, to those who are trying to rescue those who may still be trapped, and to those who are working to bring the cowards who committed this crime to justice.

"America's resolve has not been broken. In fact, I believe our resolve is stronger now than it ever has been before. We are resolved to fight terrorism. We are resolved to defend freedom. And we are resolved to put this tragedy behind us and continue down the great path of democracy that our Founding Fathers charted for us more than 200 years ago. With this same resolve, however, we must look at areas where we need to change.

"The threats of the 21st century will not be fully deterred by our military superiority, which is why we need to reorganize our federal agencies and our Armed Forces so we are better prepared to deal with

the complicated security environment in which we now live."

According to Thornberry, these changes include:

- Improving our Intelligence With better organizational focus, clearer requirements, improved coordination and dissemination and more resources. "Intelligence both technical and human remains our first and best line of defense," Thornberry remarked.
- Transforming our Military Everything from its personnel policies, to its acquisition processes, to its professional education. "It will take more than tanks and aircraft carriers to provide our security in the future," Thornberry said. "Our military must be able to deal with a broader array of threats. Business as usual will not be good enough to do the job.
- Strengthening our Homeland Security Today, more than 40 agencies have some responsibility for homeland security. "We must reorganize federal agencies to better prevent and respond to homeland threats," Thornberry stated. "It will take more than incremental changes. It will take bold steps -- even if it means stepping on bureaucratic toes -- such as the establishment of a National Homeland Security Agency."

Thornberry noted that he has introduced legislation that would do just that. The bill is called The National Homeland Security Agency Act (HR 1158). Based on a recommendation by the bipartisan Commission on National Security/21st Century, the measure would bring together four federal agencies currently on the front lines of homeland defense – the **Federal Emergency Management Agency**, the Coast Guard, the Customs Service, and the Border Patrol.

Under this legislation, **FEMA would be renamed the National Homeland Security Agency**. The new NHSA would continue to be the federal government's principal response agency in times of natural disaster. But under this plan, it would also become the federal government's principal agency for coordination, response and prevention with regard to terrorist attacks and other manmade disasters, and the principal point of contact for state and local governments. In carrying out this mission, the NHSA would be assisted by the Coast Guard, Customs Service and Border Patrol, which would be transferred to the new homeland security agency as independent entities.

Also transferred to the NHSA under this realignment would be the Critical Infrastructure Assurance Office and the Institute of Information Infrastructure Protection, which are currently in the Department of Commerce, and the National Infrastructure Protection Center and the

National Domestic Preparedness Office, which are currently part of the Department of Justice/Federal Bureau of Investigation.

"The intent of establishing a new Homeland Security Agency is not to add another layer of fat to our already bloated federal bureaucracy," Thornberry noted. "Rather, the goal is to realign and consolidate a number of key federal agencies in a way that will help the federal government better prevent and respond to homeland threats.

HR 1158 was introduced by Thornberry in March and is currently under consideration by the Government Reform Committee.

see also FEMA Executive Orders / shadow government.htm

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