

**Rep. Phil Gingrey**  
Opening Statement for FY09 DHS R&D Budget Hearing  
Subcommittee on Technology & Innovation  
March 6, 2008

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Good morning, Chairman Wu. I want to thank you for holding this hearing this morning to get an in depth look at the Fiscal Year 2009 budget request for the Department of Homeland Security's ongoing efforts in research and development. Our nation's scientific enterprise remains – and will continue to be – a critical component of our homeland security.

The efforts of the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office and the Science and Technology Directorate contribute to the preparedness of our nation against potential terrorist attacks and natural disasters. These organizations tap into the limitless creativity of our nation's scientists and engineers, leading to direct benefits for our first responders: our guardsmen, our border patrol agents, our police, and our firefighters, just to name a few.

These offices within DHS are vital components to our homeland security strategy and I want to thank the panel for being here this morning. I also want to thank all the men and women who work with you to bring the skills of our nation's scientists and engineers to bear to protect us from threats we currently face. You are performing a great service to this country, and you should be recognized for your efforts.

Mr. Chairman, last week, the full Science & Technology Committee unanimously reported the Border Security Technology Innovation Act of 2008, which is sponsored by the Distinguished Ranking Member of the Full Committee, Mr. Ralph Hall of Texas. This bill acknowledges the crucial role that science and technology play in protecting our nation's borders. Today, I expect we'll hear from our witnesses that our science and technology research and development efforts are strong and yielding immediate benefits for our nation. However, I know we can continue to improve on these efforts.

For the Fiscal Year 2009 Budget, President Bush has requested over \$1.4 billion dollars for the research and development efforts at DHS. In addition to prioritizing among the various types of threats that we face, we must also consider the character of research performed. How much spending should be geared towards long-term, basic research? How much towards incremental improvements to our current capabilities?

Mr. Chairman, we also have to consider how best to defend against an adaptive and intelligent enemy who will attempt to overcome or bypass the defenses we create. Therefore, it is crucial that we seek defenses that can be implemented as broadly as possible and minimize the chance that they can be easily side-stepped. Reaching this goal will require sustained attention to the operational needs of the Department and continual reexamination of the threats we face.

Finally, we must ensure that our substantial investments in new security technology work as advertised. Both of your agencies have been criticized in the past year for incomplete or inaccurate testing and evaluation procedures. A rigorous testing and evaluation process will help your agencies in the long-term by ensuring that your work meets the needs of our first responders. I applaud your efforts to immediately address these concerns and suggest that this Committee is well-situated to help you in your efforts.

The fundamental challenge before us is how best to distribute limited funding in the face of highly uncertain, varied, and changing threats. In the past year, your organizations have steadily improved our

nation's defenses. There are areas, however, where I think more must be done in the coming year. I look forward to discussing these issues today and seeking ways to help you implement an effective, efficient, and evolving defense of our homeland.

With that Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.