

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD

of

**Ervin Kapos
Science and Technology Directorate
Department of Homeland Security**

Before the

**U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Science and Technology
Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation**

November 15, 2007

Good morning, Chairman Wu, Congressman Gingrey and distinguished members of the Sub-Committee. I am Ervin Kapos, Director of the Operations and Analysis Division for the Science and Technology (S&T) Directorate of the Department of Homeland Security, and I am pleased to appear before you today to discuss my responsibilities concerning the oversight of the Homeland Security Science and Technology Advisory Committee (HSSTAC).

The HSSTAC was originally authorized in Section 311 of the Homeland Security Act (P.L. 107-296) for a period of three years, expiring on November 25, 2005. In October 2006, Section 302 of the SAFE Port Act (P.L. 109-347) amended section 311 of the Homeland Security Act reauthorizing the HSSTAC until December 31, 2008.

The HSSTAC is chartered to be a source of independent scientific and technical planning advice for the Under Secretary for S&T with several objectives. First, the Committee advises the Under Secretary for S&T on organizing the Nation's scientific and technological resources to prevent or mitigate the effects of catastrophic terrorism against the United States, and of catastrophic natural events.

Second, it identifies research areas of potential importance to the security of the Nation, including matters relating to science, technology, research, engineering, new product development (including demonstration and deployment), business

processes, emergency response, cargo security technology, and other matters of special interest to the Department of Homeland Security.

Third, the HSSTAC assists the Under Secretary in establishing mission goals for the future. It advises on whether the policies, actions, management processes, and organization constructs of the Science and Technology Directorate are focused on mission objectives. It advises on whether the research, development, test, evaluation, and systems engineering activities are properly resourced to accomplish the objectives. It also identifies outreach activities and reviews the technical quality and relevance of the Directorate's programs.

Finally, upon request the HSSTAC provides scientifically- and technically-based advice to the Homeland Security Advisory Council. Conversely, the Committee draws, when needed, on the expertise of outside advisory groups for independent advice on specific technical and policy matters.

At present, the HSSTAC is tasked with reviewing the threat that is expected from Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) in the United States in the next 5 and more years, and recommending Science and Technology investments to counter this threat in the future. I believe, as does Mr. Cohen, that the HSSTAC provides the S&T Directorate valuable, independent scientific and technical planning advice. We appreciate and support your efforts to extend the HSSTAC Authority to 2012. Undersecretary Cohen appreciates your support of the S&T Directorate, and I welcome your questions. Thank you.