



**One Hundred Eleventh Congress  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20515**

March 17, 2009

The Honorable Janet Napolitano  
Secretary  
Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Napolitano:

I write regarding the recently enacted American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Act) (P.L. 111-5). This law provides nearly \$3 billion to the Department of Homeland Security (Department) for infrastructure improvements, grants to States and localities, and technology procurement and deployment.

As I am sure you will agree, the Department must work to ensure that these funds are distributed and used in a manner that best enhances security and most efficiently and effectively stimulates the economy. To that end, I would appreciate a response to the following questions.

1. Aside from the \$5 million provided to the Department's Office of Inspector General, what other mechanisms have you put in place to ensure this funding is spent appropriately?
2. The Act provides a total of \$300 million for the Port Security Grant Program and Transit Security Grant Program. How will these funds be distributed? Will you work to ensure that these funds are provided based on risk to grant recipients with "shovel ready" projects? How will the \$210 million in grants for the construction and improvement of fire stations be distributed?
3. The Act provides \$100 million for border security technology on the Southwest border. The Department has experienced significant difficulty with SBInet, the technology component of the Secure Border Initiative, including cost overruns and inoperable equipment. How will you ensure that the border security technology procured using this funding will meet the needs of personnel at the border?
4. The Department recently announced that the \$1 billion for aviation security in the Act will create more 3,000 jobs<sup>1</sup> and the Transportation Security Administration has notified 17 airports that they will receive funding for checked baggage explosive detection systems. How did you determine which airports would receive funding? Are the airports that will receive funding ready to begin work on these projects immediately?

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<sup>1</sup> Press Release, Department of Homeland Security, DHS Recovery Act Aviation Projects to Create 3,000 Jobs (March 5, 2009).

5. The Act provides \$420 million for land port of entry construction and modernization. With aging infrastructure across both our Nation's Northern and Southern borders how will you determine which ports of entry will receive new or updated facilities?
6. Section 1114 of the Act passed by the House of Representatives required recipients of funding under this Act to participate in E-Verify. However, this provision was removed from the enacted version. What will you do to ensure that funding under this Act is not provided to employers that employ individuals in the United States illegally?
7. Except in certain circumstances, the Act requires the Department to comply with the Buy America Act. What steps have you taken to ensure that the Department complies with this provision? What impact will this have on the Department's procurement efforts? Does that Department have staff that is appropriately trained in this area?

Many of the provisions of the Act require you to provide expenditure plans to the House and Senate Appropriations Committee by April 9, 2009. I respectfully request that you also provide these plans to the Committee on Homeland Security to better enable our oversight efforts.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I look forward to working with you to ensure that there is appropriate oversight over the expenditure of these funds.

Sincerely,



GUS M. BILIRAKIS  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Management, Investigations,  
and Oversight

cc: The Honorable Chris Carney, Chairman, Subcommittee on Management, Investigations, and Oversight

The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson, Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security

The Honorable Peter T. King, Ranking Member, Committee on Homeland Security