



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

September 8, 2011

The Honorable John A. Boehner  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Room H-232, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker:

As you are aware, the Bipartisan Study Committee, co-chaired by the former Chair and Vice Chair of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (9/11 Commission), recently released an evaluation of the Federal governments progress in fulfilling several 9/11 Commission recommendations. With respect to the 9/11 Commission recommendation that Congress create “a single, principal point of oversight and review for homeland security,” the report emphasized that continued disjointed jurisdiction has cost taxpayers tens of millions of dollars and undermined security.<sup>1</sup>

One year ago this month, then-Ranking Minority Member of the Committee on Homeland Security, Representative Peter T. King, promised that homeland security jurisdiction would be consolidated if the Republicans gained control of the House of Representatives. At the time, he stated that “obviously, homeland security jurisdiction must be consolidated and refined, and Republican leadership will do that.”<sup>2</sup> However, since the opening of the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress, there have been no changes to homeland security jurisdiction. Last week, in response to the release of the Bipartisan Study Committee report, now-Chairman King pledged “to continue to work with [you] and other House leaders to implement this important recommendation on House committee jurisdiction.”<sup>3</sup>

As the Member with the longest tenure as Chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security, I have keen insights about the challenges posed to the security of our Nation by the current unwieldy jurisdictional divisions over homeland security and, as such, am requesting to be included in your efforts to address committee jurisdiction over homeland security. Further, I

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<sup>1</sup> Bipartisan Policy Center, National Security Preparedness Group, *Tenth Anniversary Report Card: The Status of the 9/11 Commission Recommendations*, Ch. 2 Nine Major Unfinished 9/11 Commission Recommendations p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> CQ Homeland Security, Sept. 20, 2010, Rob Margetta, Post-Election Might Be Only Chance to Streamline DHS Oversight.

<sup>3</sup> King Statement on 9/11 Report Card From Commission Co-chairs, Sept. 1, 2011, <http://homeland.house.gov/press-release/king-statement-911-report-card-commission-co-chairs>.

would note that this undertaking is timely insofar as the consolidation of homeland security jurisdiction is critical to the fate of forthcoming Department of Homeland Security Authorization legislation that the Committee is beginning to prepare.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Should you or your staff have any further questions on this matter, please contact Ms. Rosaline Cohen, Chief Counsel for Legislation of the Committee on Homeland Security, at x6-2616.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bennie G. Thompson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bennie G. Thompson  
Ranking Member

cc: The Honorable Peter T. King, Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security