



U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations

PRESS RELEASE

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HIGHLIGHTS OF FY 2009 HOMELAND SECURITY APPROPRIATIONS BILL

Washington, DC – The FY 2009 Homeland Security Appropriations bill addresses America's most critical and pressing security needs. The legislation invests in the resources needed to protect our citizens from deadly terrorist attacks, to secure our borders and enforce U.S. immigration laws, and to ensure a rapid and effective federal response to both natural and man-made disasters. The bill total is \$42.2 billion, which is \$2.4 billion above the President's budget request.

The President submitted a flat budget proposal for the Department of Homeland Security despite current security and natural disaster challenges facing the nation, said U.S. Senator Robert C. Byrd, Chairman of the Senate Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee. The funding mechanism we presented lives up to Democrats' commitments to increasing our ability to secure the homeland by increasing resources for border security; restoring irresponsible cuts in first responder grants; funding immigration enforcement; and increasing above the President's request the core homeland security missions programs that help keep our people safer. Finally the bill includes new requirements for contracting, procurement and program oversight, helping to ensure that taxpayer dollars are being carefully spent.

BILL HIGHLIGHTS

The legislation significantly increases resources for border security including:

- \$775 million, as requested, for border fencing and technology. Of these funds, \$100 million is made available immediately, \$40 million is directed toward Northern border security, and \$30 million is for interoperable communications grants for communities along the border. \$400 million is

withheld from obligation until the Department submits a detailed expenditure plan. It is expected that nearly all of the 670 miles of fencing and vehicle barriers on the Southwest border will be complete or under contract by the end of January 2009.

- 2,200 new Border Patrol agents . this will bring the total number of agents to 20,019 by the end of Fiscal Year 2009. It also adds funds to transfer 75 experienced agents to the Northern border.
- 892 new CBP officers and specialists, including: 561 for land border ports of entry, 173 for airports, 100 agriculture specialists, and 58 trade specialists.

The bill provides significant resources for immigration enforcement including:

- Direction that \$1 billion be focused on identifying and removing from the United States criminal aliens who are either at-large or already incarcerated in prisons or jails. This includes \$150 million above the request, added by the Senate bill, to continue the Secure Communities program initially funded last year.
- 1,400 new detention beds, for a total of 33,400 beds . 400 more than requested.
- \$60 million above the request for worksite enforcement (including detention beds associated with worksite enforcement actions). Worksite enforcement is funded at \$126.5 million.
- \$226 million to fully fund 104 fugitive operations teams that locate and remove illegal aliens who have been ordered removed from the country but who have absconded.
- \$189 million for the Criminal Alien Program to identify and remove aliens currently serving time for crimes committed in this country.

The bill restores irresponsible cuts in first responder grants:

- The bill restores irresponsible cuts in first responder grants by providing \$4.244 billion for the programs; this is \$16.2 million above FY 2008 enacted and \$2.071 billion above the President's FY 2009 request. Port security grants are funded at \$400 million, which is \$190 million over the request; rail and transit security grants are funded at \$400 million, which is \$225 million over the request; FIRE Act grants are funded at \$565 million, which is \$265 million over the request; and SAFER grants are funded at \$210 million, for which the request proposed to eliminate funding.

The bill provides critical increases above the request for core homeland security missions:

- The bill provides \$294 million for the purchase and installation of explosives detection equipment for checked baggage at airports, \$140.1 million above the request and the same level enacted in Fiscal Year 2008. When combined with \$250 million in mandatory funds for this program, the bill provides \$544 million. TSA is in receipt of over 80 requests totaling \$700 million for airport facility modifications for optimal checked baggage screening solutions. The recommended increase of \$140.1 million above the request greatly accelerates the ability of TSA to implement these optimal systems.
- The bill provides \$250 million for checkpoint screening equipment, \$122.3 million above the request and the same level enacted in Fiscal Year 2008. At the request level, deployment of screening technology would decrease by 64 percent as compared to Fiscal Year 2008. The bill's increase will allow TSA to accelerate the purchase of technologies that can provide significant improvements in threat detection at passenger checkpoints.
- The bill provides \$122.8 million for air cargo security, \$18 million above the request and \$49.8 million above the Fiscal Year 2008 enacted level. The bill's increase will allow TSA to expand technology pilots that evaluate the effectiveness of air cargo screening and to audit indirect air carriers, shippers, and distribution centers participating in the certified shipper program.
- The bill provides \$1.1 billion within the total appropriation provided to the TSA for activities and requirements authorized by the 9/11 Act, including: \$544 million for the procurement and installation of explosives detection systems at airports; \$122.8 million for air cargo security; \$30 million to expand Visible Intermodal Protection and Response Teams; \$390.7 million for specialized screening programs (travel document checkers, behavior detection officers, bomb appraisal officers, and officers to randomly screen more airport and airline employees); \$11.6 million for surface transportation inspectors; and \$20 million to implement regulations and other new activities authorized by the 9/11 Act.
- The bill provides \$819.5 million for the Federal Air Marshals (FAMs), \$33.4 million above the request and \$49.9 million above the Fiscal Year 2008 enacted level. The increase will allow FAMs to maintain current coverage on critical flights.
- The bill provides \$108 million for Coast Guard response boats, \$44 million above the request and \$63 million above the Fiscal Year 2008 enacted level. This funding will allow the Coast Guard to purchase 36 Response

Boat . Mediums (RB-Ms) in Fiscal Year 2009, 22 above the request. The RB-M is a critical Coast Guard asset that will replace aging 41 foot Utility Boats acquired in the early 1970's and serve as a platform for boardings, search and rescues, and port security. Recent studies have identified the lack of response boats as an impediment to fully implementing the Coast Guard's mission requirements.

- The bill provides \$353.7 million for the Coast Guard's National Security Cutter (NSC), the same amount as the request and \$188 million above the Fiscal Year 2008 enacted level. Of this amount, \$346.6 million is for the production of NSC #4 and \$7.1 million is for the structural retrofit of NSC #1. The bill's accompanying statement expresses concern with purported cost increases above the requested level and requires the Coast Guard to provide the Committees with detailed information on all reasons why there may be nearly a 50 percent increase in the cost of this cutter.
- The bill provides \$30.3 million above the request to re-activate USCGC POLAR STAR, a Coast Guard heavy polar icebreaker. Over 22 percent of the world's energy supply is under the Arctic ice cap. Russian President Dmitry Medvedev has stated that Russia should unilaterally claim part of the Arctic, stepping up the race for the disputed energy-rich region. Russia has a fleet of 20 heavy ice breakers and is nearing completion of the first of their newest fleet of nuclear-powered icebreakers in an effort to control energy exploration and maritime trade in the region. Thanks to the Bush Administration, the United States has only one functioning heavy polar icebreaker. These funds will allow the Coast Guard to reactivate the POLAR STAR to extend its service life 7-10 additional years. The Navy and the Air Force call our need for polar icebreaking capabilities, an essential instrument of US policy in the region.
- The bill provides \$23.5 million above the request for Coast Guard port and maritime safety and security enhancements. Funds are provided for additional watchstanders, boats, and marine inspection staff; to conduct testing of Area Contingency Plans; to increase maritime casualty investigations; to increase armed boat escorts and security boardings; and to increase terminal inspections of Certain Dangerous Cargoes transport and delivery.
- The bill provides \$4 million above the request for cyber crimes investigations by the Secret Service and \$1.7 million above the request for international investigations.
- The bill provides \$97.6 million for a new headquarters for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). DHS headquarters facilities are currently located in approximately 40 locations and 70 buildings throughout the National Capital Region.

- The bill provides \$904 million for FEMA Management and Administration; this is \$19 million over the request and \$279 million over FY 2008. For too long, FEMA was left to wither on the vine. This investment continues the restoration of needed resources for an Agency that is vital to the prevention, preparedness, and response efforts of this Nation as threats loom and disasters strike.

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