



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

November 20, 2019

The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security

Dear Chairman Thompson,

We are very concerned the Democrat majority's overwhelming preoccupation with its partisan quest to impeach the President is undermining the ability of our Committee to move critically needed legislation to secure the homeland. In the mist of impeachment, the majority has failed to make progress on important homeland security legislative priorities such as securing the border, safeguarding chemical facilities from acts of terrorism, protecting vulnerable public and private networks from cyber threats, or moving a comprehensive authorization of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

In the wake of an unprecedented humanitarian crisis at the Southwest Border this year, Democrats have steadfastly refused to consider legislation to address the root cause of the crisis or provide the manpower, assets, and infrastructure necessary to prevent a future one. Even commonsense bipartisan bills to require Customs and Border Patrol to inform Congress of its workforce requirements have failed to move to the House floor.

Earlier this year, we worked closely on a reauthorization of the Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards program (CFATS). Unless we enact a reauthorization in the next five months, this critical program designed to prevent terrorist attacks at our nation's chemical facilities will expire. If that happens, DHS will no longer be able to inspect chemical facilities to ensure their compliance with security standards. Unfortunately, the majority has made no efforts to negotiate on this critical legislation since the impeachment inquiry began.

The Committee has been briefed numerous times on threats from nation states and criminals intent on gaining control over the public and private networks that run our nation's most critical infrastructure. We've stood by as the number of ransomware attacks on state and local governments have exploded by over 100 percent this year. Public services such as healthcare, utilities, welfare, and schools have suffered crippling ransomware attacks. Republicans and Democrats have introduced legislation to assist these communities, but the Committee has yet to consider any of these bills.

Finally, we remain very concerned the Committee has yet to consider a comprehensive DHS authorization bill. Last Congress, the Republican majority made significant progress navigating jurisdictional issues and securing passage of the first authorization bill for the Department. Unfortunately, it appears the Democrat majority is not interested in replicating that effort this Congress. To date, no staff discussions have started on the subject, no memorandum among committees on how to proceed has been negotiated, and no public commitment from Democrat leadership has been made to consider a DHS authorization bill.

Committee Republicans are ready and willing to work with you on these, and many other critical homeland security issues. These are the challenges the American people elected us to confront. We urge you to reject the divisive politics of impeachment and work with us to solve these challenges in a bipartisan manner.

Sincerely,


Ranking Member Mike Rogers


Representative Michael T. McCaul


Representative Peter T. King


Representative John Katko


Representative Clay Higgins


Representative Mark Walker



Representative Debbie Lesko


Representative Mark E. Green


Representative Van Taylor


Representative John Joyce


Representative Dan Crenshaw


Representative Michael Guest


Representative Dan Bishop