

HOMELAND SECURITY ACT OF 2002

On June 18, 2002, President Bush submitted to Congress his legislative proposal to create a Department of Homeland Security. The Gramm-Miller-McConnell legislation, S. 2794, follows exactly the President's proposal for securing our nation. The primary mission of this department would be to prevent terrorist attacks within the United States, reduce the vulnerability of the United States to terrorism at home, and minimize the damage and recover from any attacks that may occur.

This bill creates four Department of Homeland Security divisions to carry out the following duties:

Border and Transportation Security

- Prevent the entry of terrorists and instruments of terrorism into the U.S. by securing all U.S. borders, ports, waterways, and air, land, and sea transportation systems
- Administer customs laws and all immigration and naturalization laws, including the rules governing visas and other forms of permission to enter the U.S.
- Ensure the speedy, orderly, and efficient flow of lawful traffic and commerce

Emergency Preparedness and Response

- Ensure that all emergency response providers are prepared for terrorist attacks
- Work with other federal and non-federal agencies to build a comprehensive national incident management system
- Consolidate existing federal government plans into single national emergency response plan

Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Related Countermeasures

- Secure the U.S. from acts of terrorism involving chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear weapons
- Direct development and procurement of technology used for detecting, preventing, and responding to terrorist attacks
- Establish guidelines for states and localities to develop and implement countermeasures

Information Analysis and Infrastructure Protection

- Receive and analyze law enforcement information and intelligence to detect and identify potential terrorist threats within the U.S.
- Assess vulnerabilities of key resources and critical infrastructures
- Develop and implement a comprehensive national plan for securing key resources and infrastructures

To ensure the Department can fulfill these duties, the President has requested that the Secretary have significant flexibility in hiring processes, compensation systems and practices, and performance management to recruit, retain, and develop a motivated, high-performance and accountable workforce. In addition, the President has requested that the new Department have flexible procurement policies to encourage innovation and rapid development and operation of critical technologies vital to securing the homeland.

July 25, 2002