

From:	(b)(6)	
To:		
Subject:	FW: Clear: Chairman McCaul on DHS CVE programs. Workflow # 1122335	
Date:	2016/04/18 07:52:29	
Priority:	Normal	
Type:	Note	

Erin, Nothing to add. Good for awareness. Best, Mike

-----Original Message-----

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, April 15, 2016 4:43 PM

(b)(6)

Subject: Clear: Chairman McCaul on DHS CVE programs. Workflow # 1122335

All- Please review and clear the attached by 4pm next Tuesday.

-----Original Message-----

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Friday, April 15, 2016 4:30 PM

(b)(6)

Subject: Information Copy from Nathaniel Snyder for ESEC Workflow # 1122335 (Contact 1122335) (Intranet Quorum IMA005093482)

All - please see the attached information copies of the DRAFT response letter and accompanying attachment for coordination and clearance.

Clearance at the CoS level or higher is required.

Please have clearances and/or edits loaded into IQ by Tuesday 4/19 at 4pm.

Thank you.

-OCP

<https://iq.dhs.gov/iq/workflowhome.aspx?showfolder=workflow&showcontent=ID1122335&iAccount=IQ>

Sender:	(b)(6)	
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Recipient:	(b)(6)	
Sent Date:	2016/04/18 07:52:27	
Delivered Date:	2016/04/18 07:52:29	

Page 03 of 10

Withheld pursuant to exemption

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of the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act.

Page 04 of 10

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Page 05 of 10

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Page 06 of 10

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Page 07 of 10

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

April 5, 2016

The Honorable Jeh Johnson
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

SCANNED/RECEIVED
BY ESEC SEC
2016 APR -5 PM 5:01

Dear Secretary Johnson,

In your recent testimony before the Committee on Homeland Security, you noted that “countering violent extremism (CVE)—given the current threat environment—is in my judgment as important as any of our homeland security missions...I’m very supportive and appreciative of the Congress’s efforts to help us out with grant money to do all this. There’s bipartisan support in Congress for our CVE efforts, and I’m glad to see that.” The Committee agrees with you regarding the importance of this effort, and with your comments highlighting violent Islamist extremist groups as the greatest terrorist threat to the US Homeland. In Congressional testimony last year you acknowledged, “At the moment, my priority has been focusing on communities that I believe are most vulnerable, at least some members of the community, to appeals from ISIL, Al-Qaeda, and other terrorist groups overseas who are actively targeting individuals in these communities. And so I think we need to focus on communities that themselves have the ability to influence who may be turning in the direction of violence.”

As you know, several hundred U.S. persons have joined or attempted to join the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and other Islamist groups overseas and over 80 have been arrested in the U.S. for terror-related activity. Despite the terror threat in the homeland being at its highest levels since the September 11, 2001 attacks, the Federal government lacks a cohesive strategy to counter the violent Islamist extremist ideology of al Qaeda, ISIS, and their allies.

Therefore, I am pleased that funding was included in Public Law (P.L.) 114-113, the “Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016,” to expand the Department of Homeland Security’s support to states, local governments, tribal governments, nonprofit organizations, and institutions of higher education. As outlined in this legislation, \$10 million has been allocated for “a countering violent extremism (CVE) initiative to help states and local communities prepare for,

prevent, and respond to emergent threats from violent extremism...”¹. In addition to these appropriated funds, as you know, the Department requested \$10 million in the fiscal year 2017 budget request for CVE activities. I am supportive of this request as well.

We support an adequately resourced CVE effort across the Federal government and particularly within the Department of Homeland Security. However, it is vital that the Department have a transparent strategy for how the \$10 million provided in P.L. 114-113 will be allocated, a process for ensuring that the funds are used for their intended purpose, and the capability to measure effectiveness of CVE initiatives. We also expect the Department to develop a plan for the dedicated CVE grant program to provide the resources to 501(c)(3) organizations working to, of note, counter the propaganda and recruitment efforts of ISIS and al Qaeda, as well as their affiliates and ideology. Additionally, the Department should ensure the bulk of the \$10 million goes toward counter-messaging and other engagement efforts that utilize credible voices to enhance CVE efforts and related targeted programs. It is imperative that the Department support vetted organizations that offer credible voices countering the ISIS message while ensuring these funds are distributed effectively and responsibly.

On March 30, 2016, representatives from the DHS Office of Community Partnerships (OCP) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provided a briefing to Committee staff on the Department’s plans for this funding. I thank the Department for their willingness to assist the Committee in its oversight. As a follow up to this briefing, I am writing to request written answers on the status of DHS CVE efforts, including spending plans for the \$10 million provided in P.L. 114-113 and the \$50 million requested in the FY2017 budget. Please provide answers to the following questions no later than April 22, 2016:

1. What is the status of DHS efforts to develop domestic counter messaging programs targeting the violent Islamist extremist ideology?
2. How is the Department working with social service agencies, including the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education, as part of a whole of government approach to CVE?
 - a. What role will the recently established Interagency CVE Task Force have as part of this process?
3. What is the timeline for the CVE grant selection and award process for the funding included in P.L. 114-113?
 - a. How will the Department award CVE grants? How will projects or organizations be vetted? What role will the Director of the Office of Community Partnerships have in this process?

¹ Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, § 5-543 (2015). Available at: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/2029/text>

4. What accountability and auditing plans and capabilities does DHS have in place to ensure that once these funds will be used for their intended purpose once allocated?
 - a. Does DHS have any metrics or measures for success to ensure programs using these funds are successful? If so, what are they?
5. Under what circumstances would these funds be transferred for emergent threats, as allowed in title five, section 543, Subsection (a), (b)?²
 - a. How will you ensure that CVE programs do not suffer as a result of a transfer of funds?
6. Does DHS plan to utilize information and themes from public testimonials of former or estranged extremists in the Department's CVE efforts?
 - a. If so, can you provide examples similar efforts undertaken by foreign partners?

I appreciate your continued efforts in protecting the nation against the threat of violent extremism, and look forward to conducting rigorous oversight of how you use these appropriations. If you have any questions, please contact Alan Carroll or Paige Davies on the Committee staff at (202) 226-8417.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL T. McCAUL
Chairman

² Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, § 5-543.