



Framework for Operational Control of America's Borders

Homeland Security Chairman Michael McCaul(R-Texas)

We cannot repeat the mistakes of the past by failing to ensure border security is a primary component to reforming our immigration system. The Committee is currently consulting with outside policy and operations experts to introduce legislation to compel DHS to establish a comprehensive National Strategy to secure our borders. We can no longer supply resources on an ad-hoc basis and expect to make lasting progress. The Committee will hold a series of hearings to examine the current border landscape, and what must be done to achieve full awareness of who and what is crossing our borders. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in both chambers, and with the Department, to ensure the development and implementation of a National Strategy is achieved.

There are myriad national and departmental policies addressing counternarcotics, terrorism and transnational criminal organizations, all of which touch on border security, yet still there is no clearly articulated, centralized national strategy with a sole focus on securing the border. DHS must create a holistic strategy that looks at the overall picture of the border and applies resources based on threat levels and anticipated changes in migration.

Four Guiding Principles for Legislation Establishing a National Strategy: Gain situational awareness using advanced technologies, to formulate useable metrics, while eliminating agency overlap (SAFE).

- 1. Situational Awareness:** In order to allocate resources appropriately, we must have situational awareness – an overall idea of what must go where. We cannot continue to throw scarce resources at isolated problems, only to see them shift. DHS must present to Congress a long-term analysis of where the U.S. is vulnerable based off of a holistic picture of our borders.
- 2. Advanced Technologies:** The Administration must work to incorporate existing technology such as Department of Defense Sensor Surveillance equipment used in Iraq and Afghanistan in order to gain comprehensive visibility of the border landscape. Using proven, effective technologies to enhance our border security efforts will save taxpayer dollars and make our citizens safer.
- 3. Formulate Metrics:** In 2010, Secretary Napolitano stopped using the metric of “operational control.” At that time, DHS claimed to have only 44% of the border under operational control. We can no longer base our security solely on only apprehensions, without knowing the total number of individuals who cross undetected. Nor can we base success on the number of resources allocated to different sectors or components. Gaining situational awareness will allow DHS to create a new metric to define progress – based off of the number of apprehensions relative to the *total* number of illegal crossings. Only when we have the full picture can we gauge our own progress, and we must base progress on outcomes, instead of resources.
- 4. Eliminate Overlap:** The Department of Homeland Security must present to Congress its plan to better integrate its agencies to combat all of the threats we face on our borders. DHS’s subordinate components should not unnecessarily duplicate each other’s efforts – they should instead work in complementary fashion to ensure our national security.