

January 9, 2007: Sanchez Votes to Implement 9/11 Commission's Recommendations

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 9, 2007
Making America Safer:

Sanchez Votes To Implement 9/11 Commission's Recommendations

WASHINGTON—Today, Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez (D-CA) joined House Democrats in passing H.R. 1, the Implementing the 9/11 Commission Recommendations Act of 2007, by a vote of 229 to 128. The bill includes a number of long overdue steps to substantially improve homeland security, prevent terrorists from acquiring WMD, and develop strategies for preventing terrorism.

"As our troops fight for freedom abroad, it is our job to do everything possible here at home to ensure the safety of all Americans," said Sanchez. "Today the 110th Congress has taken a new direction in fully investing to improve our nation's security."

Sanchez, the number two Democrat on the Homeland Security Committee, was particularly pleased with the enhancements in homeland security grant distribution, improved communication for first responders, assessment of critical infrastructure and improving aviation security.

Risk-Based Funding

H.R. 1 provides risk-based homeland security grant funds for the most vulnerable states. The bill provides state minimums of 0.25% or 0.45% for states with an international land border and/or sea border. These state minimums will allow more homeland security grant funding to be distributed based on risk, which should benefit California.

First Responders

The bill also establishes a stand-alone communications interoperability grant program at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that provides first responders with the necessary equipment to help them communicate with one another during emergencies.

Critical Infrastructure Security

Another important provision in this legislation requires annual updates of the National Asset Database to list the nation's critical infrastructure to be used to assess threats and allocate infrastructure protection grants. In addition, the provision requires DHS to consult each state annually to discuss their assets before removing a state asset from the database.

Aviation Security

The bill also goes far and beyond the 9/11 Commission's recommendations in improving aviation security. The bill directs DHS to establish a system for inspecting 100% of cargo on passenger aircraft over the next three years. In addition, the legislation authorizes \$1 billion in funding over 4 years to deploy in-line explosive detection systems (EDS) to our nation's airports.

In addition, the bill includes a provision that Sanchez offered as an amendment in Committee to establish an Office of Appeals and Redress to ensure a timely and fair process for individuals that are wrongly identified on the no-fly list. Sanchez drafted the provision after receiving numerous complaints from constituents of delayed and missed flights, something she herself experienced several months ago.

"The 9/11 Commission bill includes measures that Democrats have long fought for," added Sanchez. "We are confident that the implementation of H.R. 1 will make our nation safer."

###