



House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

Congressman Silvestre Reyes, Chairman

<http://intelligence.house.gov>

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Reyes statement on today's NIE on the Terrorist Threat to the US Homeland

Washington, DC – *Congressman Silvestre Reyes, D-TX, Chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, released the following statement today in response to the new National Intelligence Estimate, "The Terrorist Threat to the U.S. Homeland," released by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence today:*

"Four years ago, President Bush declared, 'Al Qaeda is on the run. That group of terrorists who attacked our country is slowly, but surely being decimated. . . . they're not a problem anymore.'

"Today's National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) rebuts the President's statement and confirms for the public what many of us have known for quite some time – that al Qaeda has been permitted to rebuild.

"The Administration's ill-fated misadventure in Iraq – at a cost of \$10 billion a month – has diverted needed resources from eliminating the threat from al Qaeda. As a 2006 NIE on terrorism noted, our war in Iraq has become a recruiting tool and training ground for terrorists. Moreover, the NIE released today points out that the real threat to the U.S. homeland emanates from Afghanistan and Pakistan, not Iraq. And this Administration has missed opportunities to address that threat.

"We must remain vigilant and focused on the terrorist threat and must ensure that we focus our nation's resources on preventing another attack on the homeland.

"As Chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, I am committed to giving our intelligence professionals all the resources they need to learn the intentions, track the communications, and disrupt the plots of terrorists. That is why our Committee passed an intelligence funding bill that provides our nation's greatest investment to date in intelligence, with emphasis on human intelligence, training, technical collection, and analysis. The bill added additional funding for linguist training, provided funds to send more analysts overseas, and enhanced our critical counterterrorism capabilities.

“While our bill provided intelligence professionals with these additional resources, we remain prepared to do more. Since 9/11, Congress has updated the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) about a dozen times, and we are ready to make adjustments to our laws, if careful scrutiny reveals that more changes are necessary.

“This recent NIE indicates that we must once again refocus our national resources on the terrorism threat. I am deeply concerned that the Administration has not provided the NSA and the Justice Department with enough resources – specifically, analysts and linguists – to track communications of suspected terrorists, and I am urging them to close that critical gap immediately.

“Some in Congress want to make terrorism a political issue. I want to encourage my Republican colleagues to join Democrats in working on bipartisan solutions to keep America safe. There is no room for partisan politics in the realm of national security.”