

# Homeland Security

## Lagging Gaps in Homeland Security

Since 9/11, our nation has taken a monumental effort to protect our homeland from future terrorist attacks. Protecting Americans from terrorist attacks is one of the most important duties of our government. However, there are several critical areas in which I believe much work still remains to be done. For example:

- There are almost 2,000 fewer border inspectors and agents than were called for in the 2001 PATRIOT Act.
- Funding for first responder programs, our front line defense against terrorists at home, has dropped 27 percent in the past three years, from a high of \$3.3 billion in 2003 to \$2.4 billion in 2006 -- funds which help our towns and cities hire, train and equip our police, firefighters and medical responders.
- While 32 million Americans use public transportation every day, we have spent only \$250 million on transit since 9/11, compared to the \$18.2 billion we've spent on aviation.
- Only five percent of incoming cargo containers are inspected for hazardous materials. Ninety-five percent of American trade comes through our 361 seaports every year, yet there is no dedicated funding stream for port security.
- Most of the cargo loaded onto passenger airplanes still goes unchecked for hazardous materials &ndash; even as passengers must empty their pockets, remove their shoes and have their baggage inspected to board a plane.

## Additional information about protecting the homeland

- Border and Transportation Security: Overview of Congressional Issues (Library of Congress)
- Port and Maritime Security: Background and Issues for Congress (Library of Congress)
- Passenger Rail Security: Overview of Issues (Library of Congress)

## Protecting yourself and your family

- National Security Emergencies for Kids
- Are You Ready? A Guide to Citizen Preparedness
- Don't be afraid...Be Ready - Ready.gov
- Citizen Corps
- American Red Cross Homeland Security Advisory System Recommendations for Individuals, Families, Neighborhoods, Schools, and Businesses
- Centers for Disease Control Health Advisory on How to Handle Anthrax and Other Biological Agent Threats

## Helpful Links

- Department of Homeland Security
- White House Office of Homeland Security
- Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (State of Connecticut)
- House Homeland Security Committee (Majority ) (Minority)