



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

June 26, 2017

The Honorable John F. Kelly
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Kelly,

Long term power outages resulting from a disruption to our critical infrastructure could cripple our Nation's economy and put Americans' health and safety in jeopardy. Because our critical infrastructure is so vital to our way of life, the federal government has recognized the necessity of securing our infrastructure from an array of risks, including the threat of geomagnetic disturbance (GMD) or an electromagnetic pulse (EMP) attack. We must be prepared for these threats, especially considering that most experts believe it's a question of when, not if, the U.S. will experience a GMD event due to extreme solar weather. The most serious threat, however, would come in the form of an EMP attack resulting from a nuclear detonation at high altitude, which could cause long-term damage to the power grid. While many believe the likelihood of such an attack is low, the damage and economic aftershocks that would follow demand that we address these risks. We cannot discount that other nation-states, such as North Korea, or sophisticated terror groups might try to utilize an EMP attack to wreak havoc in our homeland.

Congress has long recognized the threat posed by EMP and GMD and has taken numerous steps, including hearings and legislation, to help mitigate these threats. For example, last May, our Subcommittee held a hearing entitled "Oversight of Federal Efforts to Address Electromagnetic Risks" and received testimony from the DHS, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the Government Accountability Office, and a local first responder. More recently, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2017 included several provisions related to EMP and GMD threats. Specifically, the NDAA required DHS to "conduct an intelligence-based review and comparison of the risks and consequences of EMP and GMD facing critical infrastructure" and produce "a recommended strategy to protect and prepare the critical infrastructure of the homeland against threats of EMP and GMD."

The NDAA stipulated that this strategy be completed no later than one year after the NDAA was enacted. The law also requires that DHS provide Congress with an update on the progress no later than 6 months after the NDAA became law – a deadline that DHS failed to meet. Given the severe consequences were an EMP attack or GMD to occur, I was frustrated and

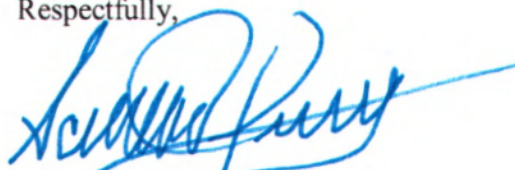
SCANNED/RECEIVED
BY ESEC SEC
2017 JUN 27 AM 7:54

concerned to learn that DHS is unsure of meeting the one year deadline, as mandated by the NDAA, for producing the initial strategy to protect our critical infrastructure from the threat posed by an EMP attack or GMD event. In furtherance of the Committee's oversight of this issue, please provide the Subcommittee with the following information no later than July 17, 2017:

1. An update on the progress DHS has made in executing the EMP and GMD related mandates required by the NDAA;
2. An explanation for why DHS missed the statutory deadline for providing Congress with an update on its work related to EMP and GMD; and
3. An estimated completion date for the strategy mandated by the NDAA.

Thank you very much for your prompt attention to this matter. Should you have any additional questions, please have your staff contact (b)(6) at (b)(6)

Respectfully,



SCOTT PERRY

Chairman

Subcommittee on Oversight and
Management Efficiency