

BILL SUMMARY

August 7, 2007

U.S.-Israel Homeland Security Cooperation

The House and Senate in late July passed landmark provisions that open new opportunities for the United States and Israel to strengthen their joint cooperative homeland security efforts. The provisions – passed as part of the Improving America's Security Act of 2007, which implements the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission – create an office of international cooperation within the Department of Homeland Security. The office will be responsible for developing, planning and implementing international cooperation efforts with key U.S. allies, including Israel. Reps. Peter King (R-NY) and Bennie Thompson (D-MS) introduced the provisions in the House, while Sens. Joseph Lieberman (I-CT) and Susan Collins (R-ME) championed the efforts in the Senate.

Key Provisions of the Bill:

- The bill establishes a Science and Technology Homeland Security International Cooperative Programs Office within the Science and Technology Directorate of the Department of Homeland Security responsible for:
 - Developing mechanisms, including grants, cooperative agreements or contracts, to support international cooperative activity for homeland security research
 - Matching U.S. entities engaged in homeland security research with non-U.S. entities conducting similar research
 - Potentially coordinating field exercises, scientific seminars, conferences and visits and exchanges of scientists and engineers
- The bill states that foreign partners may include Israel, Britain, Canada, Australia, Singapore, and other allies in the global war on terror.
- The bill calls for funding for the program to be paid from discretionary funds appropriated to the Department of Homeland Security.
- The legislation requires foreign partners to match U.S. contributions through direct funding or by providing staff, facilities, material or equipment to be used on any joint project