

Dems fight for implementation of the 9/11 recommendations

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

WASHINGTON - With America still less safe than it should be five years after 9/11, Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee Chairman Joe Lieberman, Senator Debbie Stabenow, former 9/11 Commissioner Richard Ben-Veniste, Wayne County Sheriff Warren Evans, International Association of Firefighters President Harold Schaitberger, and American Federation of Government Employees President John Gage today joined to call for a change. While President Bush and previous Congresses have chosen to delay solutions, the leaders today signaled their intent to push for the implementation of the recommendations of the bipartisan 9/11 Commission as soon as possible.

Though more than five years have passed since the terrorist attacks, two years since the 9/11 Commission released its landmark report, and over a year since the Bush Administration received D's and F's from the Commission for its implementation of the necessary changes, roughly half of the Commission's recommendations still remain unaddressed or unfinished. For example, mass transit security, equipment and technology interoperability for first responders, border security, airline security, and more are still woefully lacking.

"Every day that we don't act is another day in which we are not as secure here at home as we should be," said Senator Lieberman. "This bill would create an all-hazards strategy to strengthen our homeland security against the threat of terrorist attack but also to be able to prepare for and recover from natural disasters. We've studied. We've reflected. And now, with a real sense of urgency, it is time to act to build a safer and more secure nation for the generations to come."

"Because of the communications failures on 9-11, too many police and firefighters ran into the Twin Towers when they should have been running out," Senator Stabenow said. "Over five years after these attacks it is shameful we have made so little progress to solve this problem. The 9-11 Commission has made clear what needs to be done, and I'm proud that this legislation will help to secure the updated, compatible

equipment America's first responders need to keep our communities safe and respond to threats."

"The recommendations we made in July 2004 were designed to improve our homeland security and make all of us safer," said 9/11 Commissioner Richard Ben-Veniste. "For too long, action has taken a back seat to rhetoric in Congress. I am pleased to see this Congress taking meaningful action."

"Local police officers and fire fighters are every community's first responders," said Wayne County Sheriff Warren Evans. "In a major border community such as Detroit, with its many critical assets, various agencies need to be able to communicate with each other in an emergency. For that to happen, we need the federal government as an active partner and we need help paying for the equipment we need. This bill is long overdue."

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