

The Evolving Terrorism Threat in America and the Urban Area Security Initiative Grant Program

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Testimony presented before the House Subcommittees on
Transportation and Public Assets and National Security

**Walter Purdy
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And Transportation and Public Assets
United States House of Representatives**

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Chairman Mica, Chairman DeSantis, Ranking Members Duckworth, and Lynch, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to testify on this important issue. The terrorism threat in America is one that is constantly evolving. In the wake of the terrorist attacks in Paris, Brussels, Boston, Charleston, Chattanooga, Garland, San Bernardino, and Orlando, the last thing we should be doing is reducing the level of funding that is aimed to protect America. It is unthinkable that President Obama's budget reduces the level of funding for homeland security through the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) as well as in other funding mechanisms to protect the homeland. The threat to America from terrorists has not gone away or been reduced. The Director of the FBI, James Comey has warned that the FBI is investigating ISIS suspects in all 50 states with more than 900 investigations. Even the funding for State and Local Anti-Terrorism Training (SLATT) conducted through the Department of Justice has been reduced and cut back. Yet, the terrorism threat to America seems to be growing and evolving. Recently, the Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson testified at a Senate hearing on funding for Homeland Security that he was constrained by a budget agreement and wasn't happy but they had made hard choices. If the terrorist threat to America was reduced or going away I could support a reduction of funding to UASI and the Department of Homeland Security. But that is not the case.

Before September 11th terrorist groups like Al Qaeda sought to identify and recruit individuals to travel and train in terrorist training camps in Afghanistan. Today the plethora of terrorist groups associated with Al-Qaeda and ISIS use social media and slick on-line magazines like

Dabiq and Inspire to launch attacks wherever they may be. We have seen a large number of terrorist wannabes that have been thankfully identified, arrested and charged by law enforcement here in the United States. We can't afford to let our guard down or Congress will have to fund another 9/11 Commission when terrorists conduct a Paris or Mumbai style attack here in America. And the question the American people will want Congress to answer is "how could this have happened again in America.?" Until today, we have seen homegrown radicalized terrorists conduct attacks where the attackers numbered no more than two as in the San Bernardino attack on December 2, 2015. Yet, we are asking the law enforcement community to deal with this ever growing complex challenge as funding levels are cut. We can't expect that the law enforcement community is going to be prepared in the future when funding under UASI and other Homeland Security programs are being cut. Congress has heard from mayors, chiefs of police, sheriffs across America that have lobbied for a departure from the budget being presented by President Obama in regard to this issue.

The terrorist attacks and plots that we have seen here in the United States in the last ten years should remind us all that the threat of terrorism is not going away. The threat is evolving and getting more complex as terrorists adapt to evade and defeat measures put in place to identify them here in the United States. These issues are of the utmost importance for our country's security not only today, but in the future. America can't afford a shoe string approach to funding training for the first responder community.

In the last week we have seen arrests by the FBI of individuals in Burke and Sterling, Virginia not more than 20 miles from the Capital. These two individuals were both supporters of ISIS. One was identifying targets for a purported ISIS video and the other had purchased a weapon to launch an attack. The threat is real and I would ask you to change the direction and approach to funding UASI and other mechanisms that provide the resources and assistances needed by first responders in America.

Walter Purdy
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Walter Purdy is the President of the Terrorism Research Center (TRC), a Virginia based company that seeks to provide the best professional practices in dealing with terrorism, global issues, contemporary operating environments, asymmetrical warfare and insurgencies. TRC provides cutting edge counterterrorism research, analysis and training.

Mr. Purdy is an Adjunct Professor with the Criminology, Law and Society Department of George Mason University where he teaches Law Enforcement and Homeland Security, Introduction to Homeland Security and Use of Force Issues.

Mr. Purdy has also undertaken a number of special research projects to include: *Faces of Terrorism: Connecting the Data Points, Worldwide Study of Truck Bombings, From Munich to Manhattan and Beyond: Lessons Learned From Thirty Years of Terrorism, Emerging Threats to the United States: The Tri-Border Region, Global Study of Suicide Bombers and Attacks, The Lion Cubs: Terrorism Travel, The Hunter and the Prey: Omar Sheikh and Daniel Pearl, Europe's Elusive Terrorist Organization: 17 November, Profiles of the Taliban Leadership, Understanding the Haqqanis: How the Haqqani's View the Region, The Kidnapping Project-Captivity, Hostage-Taking and Kidnapping and others.*

He created and directs the Terrorism Research Center's Training and Special Projects Division. Mr. Purdy has trained thousands of military, law enforcement and intelligence personnel. He has traveled extensively to the Middle East, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Asia. Mr. Purdy created and directs the "Mirror Image: Training to Combat Terrorism" which has placed specialized law enforcement, military and intelligence officers an understanding of terrorist training, tactics, techniques and procedures by allowing them to walk in the shoes of the terrorist to be better prepared to defeat them.

Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
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Name: WALTER PUROY

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Amtrak less than \$25,000

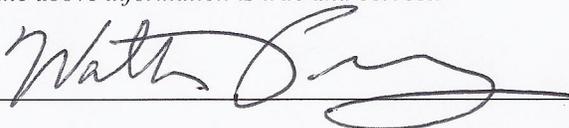
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