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The Honorable James R. Langevin
Opening Statement – Markup of HR 2631, The Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act
October 31, 2007

Today the subcommittee will markup an Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute to HR 2631, the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act. I would like to again congratulate my colleague Congressman Schiff for introducing this legislation and for working collaboratively with me to develop the amendment in the nature of a substitute we will consider today.

The Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act expresses the sense of Congress that the President should:

- pursue bilateral and multilateral agreements to establish an international framework for determining the source of any confiscated nuclear material or weapon, as well as the source of any detonated weapon and the nuclear material used in such a weapon;
- develop protocols for the dissemination of sensitive information relating to nuclear materials and samples of controlled nuclear materials to the extent required by such agreements; and
- develop expedited protocols for the dissemination of sensitive information needed to publicly identify the source of a nuclear detonation.

It also amends the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to task the Secretary with the development of methods to attribute nuclear or radiological material – both within the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office and in partnership with other Federal agencies – to its source when such material is intercepted by the United States, foreign governments, or international bodies or dispersed in the course of a nuclear terrorist attack or other nuclear or radiological explosion. The Amendment in the nature of a substitute builds on and strengthens these ideas by:

- Emphasizing that the development of a robust nuclear forensics capability will depend chiefly on an expertly trained workforce in this area, and the recognition that our workforce in this area is currently waning and that we must turn this trend around;
- It also tasks the Secretary of Homeland Security to act as the integrator and steward of our national nuclear forensics capabilities. While it is a certainty that the cooperation of all the agencies represented here is needed for success in this

mission, clearly specifying this duty for the Secretary should provide the needed leadership for success.

- The amendment further requires the Secretary to report annually to Congress on the activities of the interagency group as well as the development and maintenance of the needed expert workforce;
- And finally, it authorizes \$20 million per year for the next three fiscal years for this effort.

I would also like to thank Ranking Member McCaul for his contributions on many of the topics just mentioned to strengthen the underlying bill. I appreciate his efforts and am pleased that this subcommittee continues to be a model of bipartisanship.