

**Testimony of  
Philip J. Crowley, Senior Fellow and Director of National Defense  
and Homeland Security, Center for American Progress to the  
United States Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works  
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Good morning. I am P.J. Crowley. I direct the homeland security program at the Center for American Progress. I am grateful for the opportunity to discuss the imperative to employ inherently safer technologies and processes to make our society and economy less vulnerable to terrorism.

The Center recently conducted a national chemical facility survey. The data demonstrate that inherently safer practices can reduce or eliminate terrorism risk to millions of Americans. But change is not occurring fast enough.

I view this issue from a security standpoint, based on my experience over three decades as an Air Force officer and National Security Council staff member. I was working for the insurance industry in New York on September 11, four blocks from the World Trade Center. I understand how terrorism risk affects the private sector.

Almost five years after 9-11, the global jihadi movement is evolving. The Bush administration's rhetoric – that we are fighting terrorists in Baghdad so we do not have to confront them here – is at odds with the reality of successful attacks in Madrid, London and the plot recently discovered in Canada.

The next attack – and we should be clear that there will be other attacks – is likely to involve “self-starters” – individuals inspired by al Qaeda, but acting on their own.

Because we cannot protect everything, our priority must be reducing our vulnerability to catastrophic terrorism. This is not an arbitrary judgment, but is specific to the threat we face – that terrorists will attack where they can kill as many innocent

civilians as possible and have the most significant economic and political impact on our country. As a result, we must make chemical facilities more secure.

A risk-based chemical security strategy should include better physical security and mitigation, but it must also emphasize risk elimination. The Secretary of Homeland Security is wrong to suggest as he did in March that inherently safer technology has little to do with security. Where safer and more secure technologies are readily available, we have an obligation to remove chemical facilities and communities from the terrorism target list.

We surveyed 1,800 facilities deregistered from the Risk Management Planning (RMP) program. Among the key findings:

- 284 facilities in 47 states switched to less hazardous practices, reducing the terrorism threat to 38 million people. However, only 10 percent represented the highest risk facilities in our country.
- 87 percent of respondents spent less than \$1 million and roughly half spent less than \$100,000.
- In a range of areas – drinking water, wastewater, manufacturing, electric power production, hazardous waste management, agriculture and oil refineries – alternatives involved common technologies, not new innovation.

There is a fairness issue. While cities in Delaware, Florida, Indiana, Maryland, Nebraska, Ohio and Pennsylvania have eliminated threats to their people, they remain at risk because hazardous materials are still transported through these cities to neighboring states and communities that have not taken the initiative.

There is a strategic double-standard in how we view homeland security. The military, with support from Congress, is constantly exploring how to invest in new technologies that make us stronger around the world. Why would we not take the same approach to employ new technologies to make us more secure at home?

Voluntary actions alone are not adequate. We need a comprehensive national approach, not a series of disconnected local or regional actions. What needs to be done?

- The Department of Homeland Security should be granted authority to regulate chemical security. DHS should promulgate strong national standards to improve chemical security, including the manufacture, transportation and use of acutely hazardous materials.
- DHS, in conjunction with EPA, should establish a Center of Excellence and promote the development and broad adoption of inherently safer technologies.
- Chemical facilities should be required to do comprehensive annual security risk assessments, which should include an evaluation of safer alternatives. Findings should be reported to DHS, the EPA and the shareholders of publicly traded companies.
- The federal government should create incentives to encourage change, such as targeted grants, loans and tax credits. There should be caps on liability for facilities that meet higher standards and adopt inherently safer approaches if a terrorist attack does occur.

Our national security strategy must place greater emphasis on protecting the homeland. As good as our military, intelligence and police forces may be, they cannot be

expected to intercept every attack. We must narrow the potential for terrorists to successfully exploit our critical infrastructure. We cannot create a risk-free environment, but we must act more urgently. Business as usual is no longer acceptable.