

Eshoo Calls for Quick Approval of National Intelligence Director, Other Reforms

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WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Rep. Anna G. Eshoo, D-Palo Alto and a member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, issued the following statement today in reaction to the President's announcement of his support for the creation of a National Intelligence Director.

"I welcome the President's acknowledgement of the shortcomings in the organization of our intelligence community and his call for the creation of a national director of intelligence, but we must go further. In April my Democratic colleagues on the House Intelligence Committee and I introduced comprehensive legislation to reorganize the intelligence community. Most of these sweeping reforms were also included in the 9/11 Commission's report. Unfortunately, we have already lost critical time in responding.

"This legislation, H.R. 4104, the Intelligence Transformation Act, includes a set of interlocking recommendations to improve how intelligence is gathered and disseminated, including:

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"The creation of a director of national intelligence to oversee and manage the entire intelligence community;

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"The creation of joint intelligence centers staffed by operatives and analysts from across intelligence agencies; and

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"Comprehensive reforms to address information sharing - moving the intelligence community from a 'need to know' culture to a 'need to share' culture.

"We can't address these problems in a piecemeal fashion and these reforms shouldn't be cherry-picked. I'll be returning to Washington during the month of August to participate in House Intelligence Committee hearings, but the time for hearings is overdue. The 9/11 Commission has comprehensively studied these issues in a bipartisan manner and we should use their work to move quickly on our legislation.

"As I said upon the release of the Commission's report late last month, Congress should immediately return from its August recess to take up our comprehensive legislation. The recent threats against our nation's financial institutions make it clear that terrorists will not wait for Congress to act."

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