Prepared Statement of
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Chairman Tierney, Ranking Member Shays, distinguished members of the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs: It is an honor to appear before you this morning.

The 9/11 Commission and its follow-on organization, the 9/11 Public Discourse Project, devoted considerable attention to the topic of today's hearing. Governor Kean and Mr. Hamilton have observed that of all the Commission's recommendations, those relating to education have received the least attention. Therefore, they are especially grateful for the work of this Subcommittee in shining a bright light. They asked me to convey to you their deep appreciation for your leadership.

I. We cannot succeed with one tool alone

A central finding and recommendations of the 9/11 Commission is that you need all the tools of policy to protect the United States against terrorism. Military power is certainly necessary. It is important, but you cannot provide for the national security of the United States by the use of force alone.

The United States cannot succeed against terrorism by Islamist extremist groups unless we use all the tools of national power: military power, diplomacy, intelligence, covert action, law enforcement, homeland defense, economic policy, and – yes – developmental assistance and support for education.

If we favor one tool while neglecting others, we leave ourselves vulnerable and weaken our national effort. Former Secretary Rumsfeld four years ago asked exactly the right question: "Are we capturing, killing or deterring and dissuading more terrorists every day than the madrassahs and the radical clerics are recruiting, training and deploying against us?"

The answer is no. The threat to us today is not from great armies. The threat to us comes from the beliefs that propelled 19 young men – and propel many others -- to take their own lives in a desire to inflict grave harm upon us.

The military struggle is part of the struggle we face, but the far greater struggle we face is the war of ideas. As much as we worry about Bin Ladin and al Qaeda – and the Commission did – we worry far more about the attitudes of tens of millions of young Arabs and hundreds of millions of young Muslims.

Those who sympathize with Bin Ladin represent, in the long-term, a far greater threat to us. They represent the well-spring to refresh the doctrine of hate and destruction, no matter how many al-Qaeda members we capture or kill.

The Commission felt strongly that the United States needed to define a positive image for itself in the Islamic world – a message of hope, a message of economic and educational opportunity. Education that teaches tolerance, the dignity and value of each individual, and respect for different beliefs is a key element in any global strategy to eliminate Islamist terrorism.

II. What the 9/11 Commission Recommended

For these reasons, a Commission created to investigate terrorism made three important recommendations on education.

A. Support Secular Education in Muslim Countries

First, the Commission recommended the creation of an International Youth Opportunity Fund to support secular education in Muslim countries.

The Commission recommended that the U.S. government should join with other nations in generously supporting a new International Youth Opportunity Fund. Funds should be spent directly for building and operating primary and secondary schools in those Muslim states that commit to sensibly investing their own money in public education.

B. Rebuilding Scholarship, Library and Exchange Programs

Second, the Commission recommended that the United States should rebuild the scholarship, exchange, and library programs that reach out to young people in the Muslim world and offer them knowledge and hope.

Just as it did during the Cold War, the United States must do more to communicate its message, to explain and defend its ideals and values. We have spent too long exporting our fears and our anger, not our vision of opportunity and hope.

If the United States does not act aggressively to define itself in the Islamic world, the extremists will gladly do the job for us.

C. Support for Pakistan Against Extremists

Third, the Commission recommended that the United States should sustain the current scale of aid to Pakistan, and support Pakistan's government in its struggle against extremists with a comprehensive effort that extends from military aid to support for education, so long as Pakistan's leaders remain willing to make difficult choices in support of what President Musharraf has called "enlightened moderation."

III. Status of Recommendations

After the Commission delivered its report and recommendations in July 2004, the 9/11 Public Discourse Project followed up with public education in support of these recommendations, and a monitoring effort to track the status of their implementation.

The former Commissioners delivered a Report Card on the status of their recommendations at the end of 2005.

A. Support Secular Education in Muslim Countries

On the question of support for secular education in Muslim countries, the former Commissioners issued a "D" grade.

What has happened: The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 authorized the creation of the International Youth Opportunity Fund and instructed the Secretary of State to seek international cooperation in funding it. To date, the Executive branch has not requested funding, and Congress has not appropriated funding, to establish such a program.

The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) and USAID have initiated programs across the Arab world to support secular education improvements and the teaching of English. A number of these programs focus on female education.

What needs to be done: Congress should make appropriations to initiate the International Youth Opportunity Fund, which would allow the Secretary of State to begin seeking international contributions to the Fund.

Programs through MEPI and USAID are a constructive start to answering the challenge of secular education in Muslim countries. These programs should be components of an overarching strategy for educational assistance—and components of an overall U.S. strategy for counterterrorism. As part of that strategy, the important long-term national security tool of educational assistance should receive significantly increased funding from the Congress. The current level of education funding is not sufficient given the scale of the challenge.

B. Scholarship, Library and Exchange Programs

On scholarship, library and exchange programs, the former Commissioners issued a "D" grade.

What has happened: Overseas American libraries are closing in the regions we want to reach most, largely due to security concerns. The American Consulate and Library in Istanbul, Turkey was targeted at least six times by terrorists until it was closed in 2003. The United States closed the American Center in Islamabad in 2005. Even the American Center in New Delhi, frequently touted as a model public diplomacy facility, is being closed in 2007 due to security concerns. Over the past two years, the State Department

has increased its investment in interactive websites and American reading sections in host country libraries. Neither initiative includes the presence of U.S. personnel for dialogue, reading guidance, and educational counseling, important factors in shaping the attitudes of foreign users.

What needs to be done: The U.S. needs to make library posts abroad viable, even in the face of security challenges. The U.S. should increase support for scholarship and exchange programs, our most powerful tool to shape attitudes over the course of a generation.

C. Support Pakistan Against Extremists

On the recommendation of support for Pakistan against extremists, the former Commissioners gave a grade of "C+".

What has happened: The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 provided sense of Congress language supportive of the Commission's recommendations, but did not otherwise address them. Congressional funding in support of the President's pledge of a five-year $3 billion assistance package are encouraging signs of a long-term commitment to Pakistan. But there is still little movement beyond security assistance: Too much of our non-military assistance is in the form of a cash transfer, and too little is dedicated to improving secular education in Pakistan.

President Musharraf has made real efforts to take on the threat from extremism, yet Pakistan remains a sanctuary and training ground for terrorists. He has not lived up to his promises to regulate the madrassas properly or close down all those that are known to have links to extremist groups. Taliban forces still pass freely across the Pakistan-Afghanistan border and operate in Pakistani tribal areas. Terrorists from Pakistan carry out operations in Kashmir. Finally, the results of promised democratization efforts are yet to be seen.

The challenge of education in Pakistan is far bigger than the resources we can provide – yet U.S. assistance can also make a difference. Reports indicate that the rapid U.S. aid in response to the devastating October, 2005 earthquake in Kashmir enhanced the U.S. standing in Pakistan. When we provide tangible assistance, the people of Pakistan take notice.

What needs to be done: U.S. assistance to Pakistan must move beyond security assistance. Current funding levels are not adequate to the task of helping to revive Pakistan's failing basic education system. Funding for education must be increased. The U.S. government should pressure Pakistan to act forcefully to close Taliban-linked madrassas, shut down terrorist training camps, and prevent Taliban forces from operating across the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

IV. Conclusions

Mr. Chairman, the educational recommendations put forward by the 9/11 Commission face enormous challenges and, frankly, have not had much success to date.

The former Commissioners are convinced that we cannot win the war on terrorism unless we also win the war of ideas. We need to win hearts and minds across the great swath of the globe, from Morocco to Malaysia.

People in the Arab and Muslim world need to know that America is on their side – that America stands for political participation, personal freedom, and the rule of law; that America stands for economic and –above all – educational opportunity.

This is not just a counterterrorism policy: it is the right foreign policy to advance all of America's interests.

The United States cannot take on the responsibility for transforming the Arab and Muslim world. It is up to courageous Muslims to change their own societies. But the people of the Arab and Muslim world need to know that we are on their side, that we want better lives for them and their children and grandchildren. Secular education opens doors to a better future. America's support for education sends a powerful message to the Arab and Muslim world: It is a message of hope.

Thank you for your time and attention. I look forward to responding to your questions.