

**Opening Statement of Ranking Member Mitt Romney
Emerging Threats and Spending Oversight Subcommittee Hearing:
“Lessons Learned: 10 Years Since the Boston Marathon Bombing”
April 26, 2023**

Thank you, Chair Hassan, for convening this panel. Two of them, at least, are long-term friends. Commissioner Davis and I worked together when he was Superintendent of the police department in Lowell, Massachusetts, and then became Commissioner in Boston. Rick Serino and I, as well, have also worked together and he's been a real force in our community and nationally.

I don't know Mr. Sleeper as well, but I presume I'll be more informed by the time this day is over. I appreciate the witnesses that are here—able to describe some of the lessons we've learned from that terrible tragedy a decade ago and to help us understand what things we can do to improve our readiness for potential acts of devastation in the future.

Obviously, in the years that have passed, a lot of steps have been taken by the public sector, the private sector, as well as the federal government to make our nation more secure. But we've learned from some of the security gaps that have existed in the past, and we've made an effort to become more safe as a nation.

The coordination between federal, state, and local agencies has become a high priority after 9/11, as well as after the bombing in Boston. And that's, I think, even more important, following our withdrawal from Afghanistan and the ongoing turmoil that we're seeing in the Middle East, these call for continued vigilance and effort to make sure that we're doing everything we possibly can to protect the homeland and our citizens.

I also know that the 2013 Boston Marathon attack coincided with the rise of social media, and I'm interested in your perspectives on the impact of social media on the security of our nation. Obviously, the number of tips that must come into law enforcement is an extraordinarily large number. Finding ones that are likely to result in death or destruction has to be like looking for a needle in a haystack and how we are able to do that is a question of great concern.

So, I'm going to I'm going to pause with those opening comments and make sure that we have the time to hear from our witnesses. But with that, Madam Chair, thank you for your convening of this group and hopefully we can learn lessons that are able to be passed through our federal, state, and local communities. Thank you.