

**Opening Statement of Senator Tom Coburn**  
**“Border Security: Examining Provisions in the Border Security, Economic Opportunity,**  
**and Immigration Modernization Act (S. 744)”**  
**May 7, 2013**

Good morning. I want to welcome you all here today. I am excited to hear a discussion about what the Inspector General’s Office has said are problems and the answers to those problems.

ICE and CBP have a difficult job—an often times thankless job. I want to thank you now for what you do. It’s hard.

I am concerned with the immigration bill coming forward and the additional responsibilities that it would create, if that bill were to become law, and the ability of the agencies to carry out those responsibilities.

The reason that I’m concerned is because there are so many areas where we’re not effective today. Although we have an immigration problem, what we really have is a border control problem, a visa problem, and a guest worker problem.

And it is important that we fix the real disease, not the symptoms.

We do not have a secure border today. And we know that by the apprehensions. Even though they are less, it is still not secure.

I have a lot of concerns coming forward with the immigration bill. We will wait and see what happens in the mark-up. I think we made a mistake. We should have asked for sequential referral on it, because so much of it is going to impact the agency that is under the direction of this committee.

Nevertheless, I am very appreciative of the hard work of those giving testimony today. I especially want to thank Ms. Anne Richards for her hard work and the outlining she has done.

We have some other concerns, especially on the drone program. We sent a letter asking seeking answers about whether privacy protections have been established for that program over a month ago. We have not gotten adequate or satisfactory answers to those questions. And privacy protections are one of the things that must be a part of any drone program.

I look forward to your testimony. And again I thank you for your efforts. As Senator Carper has said, we really want to work as a committee to help you accomplish your jobs. Not throw up road blocks, but actually find out what the real problems are and what we can do about it. But also to hold you accountable for the things that you can be doing that you’re not doing today as outlined by the Inspector General.

Thank you, Senator.