

(September 19, 2006) Increased Funding Needed to Secure Our Borders

Lipinski seeks increased use of technology to secure our borders

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At a recent hearing of the U.S. House Science Committee, Congressman Dan Lipinski heard testimony from Department of Homeland Security (DHS) officials and other security experts on technology options for improving the security of U.S. borders.

"Securing our borders is critical for national security. Technology is a vital component in our toolbox for protecting our borders, and we need to be doing more research, development, and deployment of technology for border security," stated Lipinski.

Currently the DHS Border Patrol is charged with securing roughly 7,500 mile of U.S. border, much of it in remote and rugged terrain with a limited number of border patrol agents on the ground. Current research is working to create a virtual fence using sensors and imaging techniques linking in an information network which would provide the relatively small number of agents in the field with a tool to locate and track intruders. But systems and protective methods are not

Currently linked together in fact, surveillance cameras currently cover only of about 5% of the border and are not linked to the sensors, often resulting in inaccuracy and inconclusive data.

"What I heard today is that securing our borders is possible," said Lipinski, "But I was also told that it is going to take a large and sustained investment to get the job done. We need to be committed to dedicating the resources to protect our borders and our citizens. That is a critical responsibility of our government."