



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Date: January 3, 2011

LEXINGTON, Ky. - The homeland security challenges facing the nation today are more complex than they were on September 11, 2001. The transition of newly elected and appointed officials at all levels of government represents a loss of institutional knowledge for the homeland security enterprise. The recession has affected the abilities of state and local governments and the private sector to prevent, protect, mitigate, respond and recover from disasters and emergencies. Most ominously, there is steadily increasing attempts to bring terror and manmade destruction to the homeland of the United States.

"We've made significant progress over the past decade in how we safeguard the public health, safety and security of citizens," said Joe Wainscott, director of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, "and national efforts must be sustained. The threat of an attack remains high as we've seen by the recent plots disrupted and arrests made." Wainscott is one of the tri-chairs for the National Homeland Security Consortium (NHSC), a voluntary group of 21 national associations formed in 2002 in an effort to collaboratively address homeland security issues. Also serving as leaders for the NHSC are Major General William Nesbitt, Georgia adjutant general and John Madden, director, Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

The NHSC has identified six priority issues for near term policy and strategic action by the nation's leaders:

- Wisely sustain homeland security investments and efforts while creating incentives for innovative and creative solutions;
- Allocate the 700 MHz D block radio spectrum to public safety in order to enhance communications through new technology;
- Address immigration reform by moving from debate and conversation to action;
- Develop a methodology to measure homeland security performance in ways that recognize the constantly evolving threat;
- Make cyber security a priority policy issue for government and the private sector; and
- Develop a more comprehensive and coordinated approach in the rebuilding of communities struck by major disasters.

The recommendations are part of a broader white paper *Protecting Americans in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Imperatives for the Homeland* – a document that was developed by the NHSC in 2008 and updated in 2010. The white paper offers specific recommendations to enhance national homeland security efforts. The areas of focus include communication and collaboration; intelligence and information sharing; use of the military; health and medical; interoperability; critical infrastructure; surge capacity; sustained resources and capabilities; and immigration, border security and global supply chain security.

The NHSC is committed to working with the nation's leaders to continue to advance homeland security efforts.

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The National Homeland Security Consortium is a forum for public and private sector disciplines to coalesce efforts and perspectives about how best to protect America in the 21st Century. The NHSC consists of 21 national organizations that represent local, state and private professionals, and is administered by the National Emergency Management Association.