

**Statement of
The Honorable Elijah Cummings
Subcommittee on the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation
Hearing On
“Follow-up Hearing: Transportation Worker Identification
Credential”
January 23, 2008**

Today, the Subcommittee convenes to receive an update on the roll-out of the Transportation Worker Identification Credential, more commonly known as the TWIC card.

On July 12th of last year, the Subcommittee convened for its first hearing on the TWIC card in the 110th Congress. During that hearing, a number of questions were raised both about how the enrollment process would function, and particularly about how the waiver process for those initially determined to be unqualified to hold a TWIC would be managed.

At the end of that hearing, a number of questions remained unanswered – in large part because the enrollment process had to actually commence before some details about how it would proceed could be known. As a result, I promised at that time that the Subcommittee would reconvene to receive a status report on the roll-out of TWIC. That promise is fulfilled with the hearing we convene today.

The TWIC enrollment process has now been underway for about 90 days. The Transportation Security Administration, which is represented by Ms. Maurine Fanguy, TWIC Program Manager, reported to the Subcommittee that as of January 11th, 49 of 147 planned enrollment centers had been opened.

Approximately 109,000 pre-enrollments have been initiated, just under 50,000 enrollments have been completed, and just under 12,000 physical TWIC cards have now been distributed to workers in the maritime community.

Some problems with the enrollment process have been encountered. For example, TSA originally estimated that 750,000 individuals in the maritime community would enroll in the TWIC program but now estimates that at least one million individuals will need TWIC cards.

Extensive wait times have also been encountered by some individuals who are picking up and activating their TWIC cards, though I understand that Lockheed Martin is planning to allow individuals to set up appointments to pick up their cards much as appointments can now be made to complete the enrollment process.

There are other important questions about the enrollment process -- including questions that are being posed of us by workers in the maritime industry -- that we will ask of our witnesses later in this hearing.

However, while we have waited several years for the roll-out of TWIC, it appears that this time was used constructively to put in place the processes that are enabling the relatively smooth roll-out that is now underway, and I commend the parties involved, including TSA and its contractor, Lockheed Martin, for their efforts.

Importantly, the TWIC card is intended to be used to ensure that those who pose a threat to the security of our nation's maritime facilities and vessels are not allowed access to secure areas of these properties.

While the card is finally being distributed to those who work in and around the maritime industry, the Coast Guard has not announced when land-based facilities will need to begin to use the card to control access to secure areas. At the same time, the Coast Guard has not yet promulgated the rule that will explain which types of vessels will need to utilize the card to control access to secure areas.

Until those two components of the TWIC-based security system are in place, the TWIC card cannot serve its intended purpose. Therefore, we are eager to hear from the Coast Guard's representative, Rear Admiral Brian Salerno, when these two important announcements will be made.

I am also very pleased that today's hearing will give the Subcommittee the opportunity to hear from a major port – the Port of Baltimore – regarding its experiences with the TWIC card enrollment process thus far.

Represented by Maryland's Transportation Secretary, John Porcari, the Port will also be able to give insightful information on how its security officials are incorporating the TWIC card into existing access control measures.

As many of you who follow this Subcommittee know, I am convinced that simply holding a hearing to discuss a matter is not an adequate step to truly address the matter. Hearings must be followed by vigilant oversight of promised actions and by on-going investigation of continuing developments.

TWIC will be a central feature in the maritime security regime in our nation going forward, and our Subcommittee will continue to be vigilant about the roll-out of this security measure. I look forward to today's testimony, and I emphasize that we will reconvene the Subcommittee on this topic whenever it is necessary to receive an update or to address issues as they arise.

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