



October 31, 2007

The Honorable Frances Fragos Townsend
Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism
The White House
Washington, DC 20502

Dear Ms. Townsend:

The National Governors Homeland Security Advisory Council (NGHSAC) commends you on the *National Strategy for Information Sharing*. The collaborative approach taken by the Administration during the development of this new Strategy will certainly pay dividends in our national efforts to combat terrorism.

This strategy was developed with significant input from and active participation by state Homeland Security Advisors. It reflects the important role state and locals play in combating terrorism. Since state, local and tribal authorities are the first to respond to incidents and have the most comprehensive knowledge of local trends and patterns, it is clear that these personnel are in the best position to also be the first to prevent an incident from occurring. Most importantly, this strategy recognizes the need to institutionalize a culture of information sharing among federal, state, local, tribal and private sector security authorities, and provides objectives to make that a reality.

We are particularly supportive of the strategy's emphasis on state, local and tribal authorities' meaningful participation in local fusion centers that augment criminal intelligence analysis efforts with predictive indicators of terrorist activity. We also applaud the strategy's commitment to building a robust Interagency Threat Assessment and Coordination Group, which will ensure that the information gathered and analyzed by federal authorities has a state and local perspective, and provides assessments back to state and local agencies through a nationwide network of fusion centers.

As you know, piecing together information from different sources at all levels of government is the key to detecting and disrupting the plans of our enemies. We are determined and committed to implementing the goals outlined by *National Strategy for Information Sharing*.

Sincerely,

Matthew Bettenhausen
Chair, National Governors
Homeland Security Advisory Council

Timothy Lowenberg
Vice Chair, National Governors
Homeland Security Advisory Council

