

Floor Statement
to Introduce Legislation Establishing a Unified
Combatant Command for Military Intelligence
by
Senator Saxby Chambliss

Mr. President:

Today I am introducing legislation to establish a unified combatant command for military intelligence within the Department of Defense. This bill is designed to complement several other pieces of intelligence reform legislation that have been, or will be introduced, all of which call for the creation of a National Intelligence Director who will oversee our intelligence community and be separate from the position of Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

The very essence of my bipartisan bill is to bridge the gap between the National Intelligence Director and the array of military intelligence entities that he or she will have to deal with, either through direct budget authority or coordination with to ensure all of our intelligence priorities are being properly resourced. The goal of my bill is to make the National Intelligence Director as effective as possible, ensure our military men and women get the best intelligence possible when they are risking their lives to protect our

freedoms, and to better integrate our military and civilian intelligence officials into one team.

Let me explain the rationale for this bill and how it will help strengthen the overall intelligence collection and analysis of the United States.

Currently, there are fifteen recognized members of the Intelligence Community, eight of which are in the Department of Defense. The Department of Defense is not only the largest user of intelligence; it is the largest collector as well. These are realities that won't appreciably change, regardless of how we reform our Intelligence Community.

The centerpiece of almost all intelligence reform legislation is the creation of a National Intelligence Director, as proposed by the 9/11 Commission and endorsed by President Bush. However, I strongly believe that to make the National Intelligence Director really effective and to make our Intelligence Community function more efficiently, quickly, and be more responsive, the vast intelligence elements and capabilities within the military need to be brought together under a single command.

I want to give the National Intelligence Director one point of contact in the military, not eight. I want to give the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and our Unified Commanders one person to turn to for their military intelligence needs. I want the military services to resource and support a unified command for intelligence in the same way they are supporting other functional commands such as our Special Operations Command and the Transportation Command.

Mr. President, let me highlight some of the main provisions of this bill as they pertain to the responsibilities of the commander of the military intelligence command, especially as they relate to the responsibilities of the National Intelligence Director. This bill specifies that the military intelligence commander will:

- Represent the Department of Defense in the Intelligence Community under the direction of the National Intelligence Director.

- Carry out intelligence collection and analysis activities in response to requests from the National Intelligence Director.

--Prepare and submit to the Secretary of Defense and the National Intelligence Director recommendations and budget proposals for military intelligence forces and activities.

-- Establish priorities for military intelligence in harmony with national priorities established by the National Intelligence Director and approved by the President.

-- Ensure the interoperability of intelligence sharing within the Department of Defense and within the Intelligence Community as a whole, as directed by the National Intelligence Director, and

-- Respond to intelligence requirements levied by the National Intelligence Director.

Mr. President, let me reiterate that this bill is designed to complement broader legislation creating the National Intelligence Director. I believe that it will make the National Intelligence Director more effective, better represent the needs of our warfighters to the National Intelligence Director, and create synergies and economies of scale within the Department of Defense on intelligence issues. In short, this bill will make our overall Intelligence Community more effective.

The Department of Defense needs to embrace our new intelligence team, headed by the National Intelligence Director, not as eight separate members but as one. I am convinced that creating a unified command for military intelligence will be good for the military, good for the National Intelligence Director, and good for our country.

Thank you Mr. President.