



Senate Approves Feinstein Amendment
To Improve Intelligence Functions of FBI
October 5, 2004

Washington, DC – The Senate today unanimously approved an amendment offered by Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) clarifying the FBI’s role under the intelligence reform legislation introduced by Senators Susan Collins (R-Maine) and Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.).

The amendment, supported by 9/11 Commission Chair Thomas H. Kean and Vice Chair Lee H. Hamilton, ensures that the foreign intelligence-related functions of the Federal Bureau of Investigation are carried out under the supervision of a new National Intelligence Director as the Collins-Lieberman legislation intends.

In her comments on the Senate floor last Thursday, Senator Feinstein argued the case for reorganizing the intelligence-gathering functions of the FBI.

“Prior to 9/11, FBI agents had gathered information that foreign individuals, perhaps associated with foreign terrorist organizations, may have been learning to fly passenger airplanes,” Senator Feinstein said. **“At the very same time the rest of the Intelligence Community had information that Al Qaeda was preparing to strike against the U.S., and also that there had been past consideration of the use of airplanes as an attack method.**

“Putting together these disparate pieces of information is the business of an effective Intelligence Community. But it did not happen, in part, because the FBI was not adequately linked up with the rest of the Community. The amendment before us goes a long way toward remedying this by placing the FBI’s foreign intelligence elements under the overall supervision of the National Intelligence Director.

“The bottom line is that the FBI’s intelligence functions must be a part of a larger effort, guided by a strong leader, and linked carefully with all of the other agencies and departments in the Intelligence Community.”

Senator Feinstein’s amendment keeps operational control of the FBI within the office of the FBI Director and under the Attorney General, but places its work as a foreign intelligence agency under the general guidance of the National Intelligence Director.

“It underscores her commitment to making the FBI as effective as possible in the war against terrorism,” Senator Collins commented about Senator Feinstein’s amendment. **“I thank the Senator for her leadership, and I urge adoption of her amendment.”**

“The amendment also modifies the definition of national intelligence under the bill, in order to make clear that national intelligence programs within the FBI will be included within the national intelligence program,” added Senator Lieberman during his remarks on the Senate floor. **“We are all going to be together in the national intelligence program under the national intelligence director, protecting the safety of the American people. This amendment increases substantially the probability that we can deter the terrorist enemy by knowing where they are before they strike us.”**

###