

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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Opening Statement Ranking Member Gerald E. Connolly H.R. 3210, the “SECRET” Act July 19, 2017

Mr. Chairman, Congressman Steve Knight and I introduced the “Securely Expediting Clearances Through Reporting Transparency Act” to enable Congress to monitor the efficiency of the background investigations process.

Our bill imposes a common sense requirement on the National Background Investigations Bureau to report to Congress on backlogs that develop in the background investigation process.

Backlogs have been a problem in the past. In 2004, when the Department of Defense was the lead agency performing background investigations, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) determined that the backlog was 375 days – over one year. Over one hundred thousand new investigations or reinvestigations were delayed by that backlog.

In response, Congress transferred responsibility for background investigations to the Office of Personnel Management, and more recently, created the National Background Investigations Bureau within OPM.

H.R. 3210 will provide Congress with transparency needed to conduct oversight of the National Background Investigations Bureau and help prevent backlogs in the future. I urge the Committee to support it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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