

Meeting Minutes
DHS Homeland Security Advisory Council
Public Conference Call
May 13, 2010
4:00 PM ET

Call Participants

Jeff Moss	Dick Cañas
Izzy Patoka	Sara Bardinelli
Judge William Webster	Chuck Canterbury
Becca Sharp	Clark Ervin
Dr. Skip Williams	Chuck Wexler
Ryan Merola	Governor Martin O'Malley
Mike Grossman	Dana Thompson
Ellen Gordon	

WILLIAM WEBSTER: Thank you. Good afternoon. This is William Webster. I am Chairman of the Homeland Security Advisory Council, and I hereby convene this meeting. This is a public meeting of the Council, and we appreciate those members of the public, the government, and the media who have joined us today. I also would like to welcome the members of the Homeland Security Advisory Council and members of the Countering Violent Extremism Working Group who are on the call today.

Our purpose today is to hear the results of the HSAC's Countering Violent Extremism Working Group meetings. At this time, I would like to turn it over to Governor Martin O'Malley. Governor O'Malley is the Governor of Maryland, a member of the HSAC, and also the chair of the Countering Violent Extremism Working Group. Governor, the floor is yours.

MARTIN O'MALLEY: Judge, thank you very, very much. By way of background, this Working Group, the Countering Violent Extremism Working Group, originated from the Secretary's tasking of the Homeland Security Advisory Committee back at our February 2010 meeting in New York, where she directed the HSAC to work with state and local law enforcement, as well as relevant community groups, to develop and provide recommendations regarding how the department can better support community-based efforts to combat violent extremism domestically, focusing in particular on issues of training, information sharing, and the adoption of community-oriented law enforcement approaches to this issue. The Secretary, one of the terms she used, was how can we go about creating the architecture of engagement that allows us to get ahead of this issue?

So specifically, the recommendations focus on the following issue areas: best practices in states, information sharing, and training. Let me say a word about each of them. On the best practices, we've surveyed some of the best practices that are demonstrating how we can create this architecture. Much of it was focused on police and community partnerships, but some of the examples are actually broader. This is a working draft. I think, hopefully, as this work in progress continues that we'll be able to beef up this section with other examples from states. I think if we lead with police as we create this architecture, that we're leaving 95 percent of the rest of the things

that society does, so, anyway, we looked at some of the best practices demonstrated by police and community partnerships, how this approach will lend itself to preventing violent crime that is motivated by extreme ideological beliefs, how does this effort to counter violent extremism impact the police — community partnership.

On information sharing, we looked to questions like what information and intelligence should DHS be providing to state and local law enforcement so that they're better able to integrate the sorts of threats that are posed by ideologically-motivated violence and to ongoing efforts to prevent violent crime in our local communities on a daily basis.

And on the training, if local law enforcement were to incorporate efforts to counter violent extremism into pre-existing community-oriented violent crime reduction efforts, what type of training would our frontline officers or officers on the beat and our detectives, investigators, and other management personnel require?

So looking at those sorts of areas broadly, over the course of several weeks, the Working Group convened through phone calls and in-person meetings in Washington, D.C., to put together their recommendations to the Homeland Security Advisory Council. The recommendations were focused on answering the Secretary's charge, and, in the interest of time, I'll just touch on a few of them.

Among the key findings was that community-oriented policing could work in preventing violent crime. The Working Group found that information-driven community-oriented policing efforts have proven effective in reducing or preventing violent crime in numerous jurisdictions across the nation.

The Working Group also noted that the emphasis should be on building safe, secure, resilient, and crime-resistant communities. In working with community members, law enforcement seeks to understand and proactively address factors which enable violent criminal activity to occur.

Thirdly, effective public-private partnerships designed to enable civic engagement across the whole, breadth of issues, problem solving, as well as violent crime mitigation provide the foundation for efforts to prevent and protect against and respond to violent criminal activity, including activity that's motivated by ideological objectives.

Fourth, while acknowledging that information-driven community-oriented policing efforts hold great promise, that promise will be best realized when local authorities work with community members to understand and mitigate all the threats facing local communities.

So the Working Group established that, as we all know, all violent crime is local. If you call 911, it's a local call. While there may be some common indicators of ideologically-motivated violence, each circumstance is always different and needs to be viewed individually and viewed within the context of the specific community within which that suspect lives, works, operates.

And finally, the Working Group found that there can be tension between those involved in law enforcement investigations and those that are collaborating to establish that architecture of civic engagement, those local partnerships to stop violent crime. Community policing could be impeded if enforcement tactics are perceived as

conflicting with community partnership efforts, and that's a tension, of course, that we live with and manage, and it's just part of the terrain.

Roles and responsibilities of state, tribal, local law enforcement, and community need to be clearly defined and articulated. Law enforcement should be sensitive to the fact that perceptions regarding enforcement actions and intelligence gathering, of course, can impact the effectiveness of community-oriented policing goals, so I want to thank all of the Working Group members and the HSAC staff for their hard work in putting forth these recommendations in this draft and within a tight timeline. I think it's a good beginning, and I think we can build on this.

And I turn the call back over to Judge Webster to begin deliberations on the recommendations.

WILLIAM WEBSTER: Thank you very much, Governor.

MARTIN O'MALLEY: Thank you.

WILLIAM WEBSTER: We will now allow for deliberations over the recommendations. Does any HSAC member have any comments on the recommendations before we proceed? Please identify yourself prior to your comments. Would anyone care to speak?

It sounds like a full and complete report, Governor.

MARTIN O'MALLEY: Well, I think it's only just the beginning, Judge, and, you know, I do think there are things that some other states are doing in having these sorts of checklists and things, and getting them in front of the Secretary could be helpful too.

WILLIAM WEBSTER: All right. I'll ask once again. If any member of the Council desires to make a statement or to comment on the report that the government has given, please do so now.

CLARK ERVIN: Judge, this is Clark Ervin at the Aspen Institute. I would just quickly state the obvious, and that is I'm honored to have been a part of this, and I'm delighted that the the Secretary has given us this charge and that we've taken it up, and I hope and think that these recommendations will be useful. And I just note that the recent Times Square incident underscores the importance of understanding such issues and tackling them, as I think we have begun to do here.

WILLIAM WEBSTER: Good point. Thank you.

DICK CAÑAS: Judge, this is Dick Cañas. I just want to add to what Clark just said that those of us who sat through some of the deliberations with the Working Group that Governor O'Malley chaired can attest that the conversations were very spirited, very candid, very helpful, and very comprehensive. A lot of thought went into these recommendations, and I think it just bears noting that just because we're silent on this end doesn't mean that we weren't fully involved, at least those of us who were there. But they've done a very commendable job.

WILLIAM WEBSTER: Thank you very much. Anyone else have an interest in making a point for the record or for the public?

MARTIN O'MALLEY: Judge, this is Governor O'Malley again. I just wanted to underscore and thank everybody for their contributions to this, but I think a couple of parts of this are particularly good with regard to — I know the training and the importance of coming up with some better training and real-life examples and also the essential importance of developing these fusion centers as a real tool and a way to connect people and bring all of us together. I thought those were two of the stronger parts of the report.

WILLIAM WEBSTER: Well, I certainly agree with that. I've been tracking the 72 fusion centers and their contributions to state and local authorities to a better understanding of what's going on, not only in their locality but potentially around the United States, so couldn't agree more.

Does anyone else have any comments on the recommendations?

Well, hearing none, that's very good. I think we're ready to take a vote on the recommendations as reported and summarized by Governor O'Malley on the Countering Violent Extremism Working Group report. All members in favor of adopting the report, please say "Aye."

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

WILLIAM WEBSTER: All members opposed, please say "No." Very well, by voice vote, it is unanimously adopted.

Now we're going to bring this public session to a close. Members of the public who would like to provide comment, and that includes the media, who would like to provide comment to the Homeland Security Advisory Council may do so in writing, by writing to the Homeland Security Advisory Council, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 1100 Hampton Park Boulevard, Mail Stop 0850, Capitol Heights, Maryland 20743, or by way of email to — and these letters are all in caps — HSAC@DHS.gov. Those comments are appreciated, and they'll be reflected in the meeting minutes.

So it's my privilege to declare this May 13, 2010 meeting of the Homeland Security Advisory Council adjourned. And thanks to all of you for joining and for your participation. We are adjourned.

MARTIN O'MALLEY: Thank you, Judge.