

National Security Working Group
Weekly National Security Working Group Update

Congressman Jim Jordan (R-OH), RSC Chairman
Congressman Trent Franks (R-AZ), NSWG Chairman

Colleagues, the National Security Working Group (NSWG) is comprised of Trent Franks, 2nd, Arizona; Connie Mack, 14th, Florida; Duncan Hunter, 52nd, California and Allen West, 22nd, Florida. We look forward to providing RSC members updates on national security issues and matters using this forum. We welcome your inputs.

Electro Magnetic Pulse (EMP) refers to any electromagnetic pulse meant to damage or destroy electrical systems. It can be generated intentionally with an electromagnetic weapon (IEMI) for a local attack or, for broad regional or even national coverage, such as a High Altitude EMP (HEMP): a sudden, intense pulse of electromagnetic energy resulting from a nuclear detonation in space. It could damage or burn out the electrical grid, computers, telephones, water supply and other critical infrastructures of a region, a nation or an entire continent.

The probability that such an event will occur increases daily, which makes protecting the grid an urgent matter of national security. This issue is not limited to our electric grid, but extends to protecting the lives of millions of Americans, and potentially the survival of the American way of life itself. The growing integration, use of modern control mechanisms and load requirements in recent years have made our electric grid more critically vulnerable than ever before to electromagnetic pulse, whether it be man-made or natural. We will submit a bill to secure our electrical infrastructure, the GRID Reliability and Infrastructure Defense (GRID). The previous GRID Act passed through the House on suspension in June of last year. It sat dormant in the Senate, with little chance of it coming to pass before the end of the last Congressional session. We must work tirelessly in this Congress to secure the passage of the GRID Act ensuring the protection of our electric infrastructure.

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This week Secretary Clinton met with President Felipe Calderon in her second visit to Mexico in less than a year – highlighting the serious threat the U.S. faces from the violence across the border. Last week, 15 decapitated bodies were found in the resort town of Acapulco, intimidating tourists and citizens, and this week 7 youths were massacred while playing soccer in the border town of Ciudad Juarez. In 2010, there were 15,000 deaths from drug related violence, including 11 mayors and public servants, three Americans with consulate ties and reports of more than 37 U.S. citizens killed in Ciudad Juarez alone, all examples of the nexus drug traffickers have formed with terrorism. These illegal armed groups represent a national security threat that possesses the cash, arms, man-power and dedication to combat a weakened Mexican government. The threat of a failed state on our border and the increasing violence flowing across the border into U.S. cities has evolved into what some are calling “America’s third (undeclared) war.”

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Defense Spending and Providing a Strong National Security: In April 2009, Secretary Gates addressed the Navy War College and warned against the historical precedent of major defense cuts at the conclusion of the Nation’s wars. Yet two years later, with the administration demanding cuts to defense spending, Secretary Gates has questioned the need to maintain an amphibious capability in the Armed Services, proposed major draw downs in manpower, and planned cancellation of major combat systems like the Marine Corps Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle (EFV). While the military budget should not be immune from scrutiny, the Secretary of Defense should ensure that achieving greater efficiency in the defense budget includes needed funding for modernization and does not result in elimination of core capabilities.

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