

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D – Ore.) issued the following statement today about efforts to reform the nation’s intelligence agencies. The intelligence reform bill under consideration includes a number of provisions to make America safer and more secure, including the creation of a national intelligence director. The bill was created in response to the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission.

“It is a relief to finally pass this important legislation to make America safer. The bill moves our national security and intelligence coordination efforts forward and paves the way for future counterterrorism measures.

“I am concerned by some of the limits placed on the powers of the National Intelligence Director and would liked to have seen stronger safeguards for individual civil liberties. I am pleased to see that the most egregious immigration provisions were removed by the Conference Committee.

“While it is unfortunate that it took two months to pass this bill, the Senate overwhelmingly passed a bipartisan bill two months ago that had the support of the 9/11 Commission, families of the 9/11 victims, and President Bush. That legislation could have been passed immediately. Instead, we almost didn’t get a bill at all

“The challenge now will be to focus our efforts on the greatest threat to America today: terrorism. My commitment is to work to make the new structure a success and to not allow the quagmire in Iraq to divert us from the essential task dealing with terrorism.”

The Senate will consider the legislation tomorrow. It is widely expected that the bill will be passed by the Senate and signed into law by the President.