



# Statement

For Immediate Release

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## ACC URGES CONGRESS TO SUPPORT MULTI-YEAR EXTENSION OF CHEMICAL SECURITY REGULATIONS

WASHINGTON (March 12, 2019) – Congress should support the ongoing effort to safeguard chemical facilities and provide much needed stability to one of the nation’s anti-terrorism programs. That’s according to Kirsten Meskill, Director of Corporate Security for the BASF Corporation, who [testified](#) today on behalf of the American Chemistry Council (ACC) before the House Committee on Homeland Security Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection and Innovation.

“ACC supports a long-term reauthorization of the [Chemical Facility Anti-Terrorism Standards \(CFATS\)](#) program. Ensuring that CFATS remains in place is a crucial part of establishing a stable regulatory environment and providing the needed certainty to foster long-term security investments,” said Meskill.

CFATS has proven to be well-suited for regulating security because it is able to account for the diverse nature of facilities that manufacture, use or store chemicals and the unique challenges each facility faces while ensuring they have measures in place to address wide-array of security standards. Thanks to improvements along the way, the program has made great strides since it began more than decade ago thanks to thoughtful leadership that has looked for opportunities to work with stakeholders to make the program better.

“Over the past few years, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has significantly improved its administration of the CFATS program; having a positive impact on chemical security across the United States. Several factors have led to its recent success, including: Improved site security inspections; improved risk assessment; and, a more streamlined and consistent Site Security Plan (SSP) authorization process,” Meskill continued. “Most importantly, DHS leadership has demonstrated a willingness and commitment to work with the regulated community to help improve the program.”

Recognizing that there is still room for further improvement to CFATS, Meskill concluded her testimony by offering several specific recommendations, including limiting worker screening against the terrorist database to high risk facilities to help reduce the risk of putting sensitive personal data at risk; improving the transparency of the program – particularly relating to the process of tiering facilities; and creating an industry stewardship recognition program that will help incentivize operators to go beyond regulatory compliance.



In addition to offering suggested improvements, Meskill underscored that the primary goal of CFATS must not be compromised. “It is also important that CFATS maintain its security focus,” she said. “The continued success of the CFATS program will depend upon its ability to help manage security risks. CFATS should not stray into areas outside of its primary function of addressing security risks and into areas already addressed by well-established environmental and safety regulatory programs administered by other federal and state agencies. Layering on additional responsibilities could impair its focus and will impede its progress toward the goal of protecting important critical infrastructure from security threats.”

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*The American Chemistry Council (ACC) represents the leading companies engaged in the business of chemistry. ACC members apply the science of chemistry to make innovative products and services that make people's lives better, healthier and safer. ACC is committed to improved environmental, health and safety performance through Responsible Care®; common sense advocacy designed to address major public policy issues; and health and environmental research and product testing. The business of chemistry is a \$526 billion enterprise and a key element of the nation's economy. It is among the largest exporters in the nation, accounting for ten percent of all U.S. goods exports. Chemistry companies are among the largest investors in research and development. Safety and security have always been primary concerns of ACC members, and they have intensified their efforts, working closely with government agencies to improve security and to defend against any threat to the nation's critical infrastructure.*

