



# Newsletter

## PNSR Preliminary Findings Call for Change in National Security System

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*"Our national security system is broken and needs fixing," said Guiding Coalition Member Thomas Pickering. "Agencies need to cooperate rather than compete with each other as they work to protect the United States from a broad range of new dangers never imagined when the National Security Act of 1947 was signed in to law."*

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The Project on National Security Reform issued its Preliminary Findings Report July 29, concluding that major changes are needed to modernize and improve the national security system created for the federal government in 1947.

The report found that America's national security system has substantial flaws that make it difficult for the U.S. government to rapidly and effectively respond to emergencies, despite reforms made since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

The findings are based on research and analysis by more than 300 national security experts from think tanks, universities, federal agencies, law firms and corporations.

The final report by PNSR – scheduled for release in October – will offer a broad array of legislative, organizational and policy recommendations in an effort to improve the U.S. response to national security challenges.

Among the most significant problems confronting the national security system, as detailed in the Preliminary Findings:

- Jurisdictional fighting between cabinet secretaries and other agency heads that wastes money and time, and slows down government response to crises.
- Poor congressional budget oversight of individual agencies, making it difficult for them to work together.
- An increasing number of political appointees who serve only briefly in national security posts.
- Lack of long-term planning by the president and top advisers, who instead spend too much time on day-to-day crisis management.

## Public Affairs Staff Hired

In a move to reach out to the news media, think tanks and universities to inform a broad audience about PNSR's work, PNSR has hired three veteran journalists to staff its public affairs office. All worked as independent public relations consultants immediately prior to joining PNSR in July and August.

Press Secretary David Egner is a former Associated Press reporter who has held public affairs positions with New York state government, the federal government, a public relations agency and the RAND Corp.

Deputy Press Secretary Frances Hardin is a former CNN White House correspondent who later worked in media relations for the International Monetary Fund.

Deputy Press Secretary Judith Evans is a former reporter for New York Newsday and the Washington Post.

## PNSR Upgrades Web Site

PNSR has revamped its Web site, [www.pnsr.org](http://www.pnsr.org), and more improvements are on the way.

The new site was launched to coincide with the release of the PNSR Preliminary Findings Report. The left side of the homepage is used to highlight new postings, including news releases and videos of Guiding Coalition members discussing national security system issues. Videos of Executive Director Jim Locher and Center for the Study of the Presidency President and CEO David Abshire have already been posted.

A News Room page has been created for the media, more short biographies of staff and Guiding Coalition members have been added, and news stories published in the media about PNSR are being posted in a section called PNSR in the News.

More changes are coming to the Web site in the near future, including creation of a PNSR blog that will discuss national security issues and invite comments from the public, and RSS feeds that will enable people to sign up to receive e-mails with new content posted on the PNSR Web site.

## Media Cover Preliminary Findings Report

PNSR gained significant media coverage on the release last month of its preliminary findings on the U.S. national security system – led by an Associated Press story carried in hundreds of news outlets across the country.

The AP story featured prominent quotes from PNSR Executive Director Jim Locher and Guiding Coalition Member Thomas Pickering.

Other coverage of the report's release included: [cnn.com](http://cnn.com), CNN's "American Morning," United Press International and stories on more than 60 blogs.

## PNSR Represented at Political Conventions

PNSR Political & Legal Affairs Director Job C. Henning and Congressional Liaison Steven J. Nider will attend the Democratic and Republican conventions to brief party leaders and delegates on the Preliminary Findings Report and PNSR's overall efforts.



## New Faces on Legal Staff

The Legal Working Group has added two lawyers to assist in legal research that will become a part of the PNSR final report in October.

Deputy Director Jeff Greene is the former staff director of the Management, Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee on the House Committee on Homeland Security. Prior to that, he served as counsel to the Senate's Special Investigation into Hurricane Katrina. He also has worked as an attorney in private practice, focusing on government contracts, civil and criminal investigations, and civil and criminal fraud cases.

Staff Attorney Justin Rubin worked as an attorney in the litigation department of Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hall and Dorr LLP. At Wilmer, he worked on a range of cases in appellate and trial courts

## PNSR on the Hill

PNSR has been briefing members of Congress and their staffs on various aspects of the project.

Executive Director Jim Locher and Guiding Coalition Member Jeffrey H. Smith met with Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) on July 29, the day the Preliminary Findings Report was released. On the same day, Guiding Coalition member Thomas Pickering, Political & Legal Affairs Director Job C. Henning, and Congressional Liaison Steven J. Nider briefed Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.) on the principal findings of the report.

Other PNSR briefings in July included the staff of the Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV), the staff of Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-NY), and national security experts at the Congressional Research Service.

On Aug. 7, Jim Locher met with the full staff of the Senate Homeland Security & Government Affairs Committee and discussed how the findings related to their work.

