



# News from Congressman **Tom Lantos**

**12<sup>th</sup> Congressional District of California  
San Mateo/San Francisco**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**FOR INFORMATION CALL:**  
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## **Congressional Hearing in San Mateo to Include Law Enforcement and Explosives Industry Officials and Visit to Site of Explosives Theft**

**Washington, DC** — Department of Justice officials from Washington, D.C., law enforcement officers and local government leaders, along with explosives industry experts, will testify at an August 2 hearing in San Mateo on federal and state guidelines for the storage, monitoring and protection of explosive materials. The hearing will focus on the potential terrorist threat and adequacy of safeguards and security measures for publicly managed explosive storage facilities.

**The hearing will begin at 10:00 a.m. Monday, August 2 at the San Mateo City Council Chambers at 330 West 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue in San Mateo.** [TV stations wishing to cover the hearing will please phone Bob King at the number above to ensure that sufficient space will be made available.]

Congressman Tom Lantos (D-San Mateo/San Francisco) said, "Explosives stored at public facilities are a real target of opportunity for terrorists and other criminals. We must learn from our experience in San Mateo and San Francisco in order to improve and protect our communities. Our hearing will not be a court proceeding, and we will go well beyond the facts of the current case. The point is to minimize the risk that such a problem will occur here or elsewhere in the future."

The hearing is being held at the request of Lantos, who is a senior member of the House Committee on Government Reform. The chairman of the Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations, Christopher Shays (R-CT) agreed to conduct the hearing to examine the appropriate federal role in protecting stored explosives. According to Congressman Shays, "While it is not possible to protect or eliminate the vulnerability of all attractive terrorist targets throughout the country, strategic improvements in security can make it more difficult for attacks to succeed and can lessen the impact of attacks that may occur."

Federal witnesses who will participate in the hearing are: Walfred A. Nelson, Deputy Assistant Director of Enforcement Programs at the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) at the Department of Justice and Michael Gulledge, of the Office of the Inspector General at the U.S. Department of Justice. The federal witnesses will be questioned about the adequacy of federal laws and existing enforcement programs to assure the security of high explosives stored by law enforcement agencies.

San Mateo County Board of Supervisors President Mark Church and Supervisor Mike Nevin will address municipal government safety concerns at the hearing. Local law enforcement witnesses will include San Francisco Chief of Police Heather Fong and San Mateo County Sheriff Don Horsely.

California Highway Patrol Assistant Chief Scott MacGregor and an official of the California State Department of Homeland Security will testify about state storage regulations. James Christopher Ronay, President of the Institute of Makers of Explosives (IME) and Barney T. Villa, International Director of the International Association of Bomb Technicians and Investigators (IABTI) will clarify the storage requirements for high explosives and industry recommendations.

Prior to the hearing, Members of Congress participating in the hearing and law enforcement witnesses will visit the site near the Crystal Springs Reservoir from which explosive materials were taken earlier this month. NOTE: Press wishing to accompany the group in order to take photographs of the storage site should contact Lynne Weil at 202-225-2817 to make arrangements.