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October 16, 2019

David P. Pekoske  
Administrator  
Transportation Security Administration  
601 12th Street  
Arlington, VA 20598

Dear Administrator Pekoske:

I write to express concern about the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) recent changes to the Known Crewmember Program (KCM). The KCM links airline employee databases to TSA systems in order to allow TSA security officers to verify the identity and employment status of crewmembers.<sup>1</sup> The KCM then allows the TSA to expedite the airport security screening of verified crewmembers, which reduces the number of people in passenger screening lines while protecting aviation safety from potential insider threats.<sup>2</sup>

According to reports, the TSA recently considered shutting down the KCM, before instead making abrupt and disruptive changes to the requirements for expedited crewmember screening.<sup>3</sup> Although I am pleased that the TSA did not wholly abandon this critical security program, I understand that the TSA announced these new requirements without consulting or providing advance notice to the relevant stakeholders, including airline pilots and flight attendants.<sup>4</sup> This resulted in widespread uncertainty among crewmembers at our nation's airports, and the TSA ultimately postponed one of its new requirements after crewmembers had the chance to express their concerns.<sup>5</sup>

I am concerned by the TSA's decision-making process behind these recent actions. Although rapid decisions must sometimes be made in light of specific threats to aviation security, I believe that the TSA must consult all the relevant stakeholders whenever possible before taking this kind of action. Airline pilots, flight attendants, and other crewmembers offer a particularly valuable perspective on aviation security. These employees are our eyes in the skies and serve on the

<sup>1</sup> *About Us*, KNOWN CREW MEMBER, <https://www.knowncrewmember.org/about-us/> (last visited October 8, 2019).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Rene Marsh and Gregory Wallace, *TSA considered ending special pilot security program*, CNN (Aug. 26, 2019), <https://www.cnn.com/2019/08/26/politics/tsa-considered-ending-special-pilot-security-program>.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> Kerry Lynch, *TSA Backs Off Uniform Mandate for Known Crewmembers*, AIN Online (Aug. 27, 2019), <https://www.ainonline.com/aviation-news/business-aviation/2019-08-27/tsa-backs-uniform-mandate-known-crewmembers>.

frontlines of aviation security and safety. I urge you to commit to proactively consulting and notifying these communities about any future changes to the KCM or related programs. I believe that more robust stakeholder engagement will allow the TSA to both make informed decisions and reduce the administrative hurdles to implementing new security policies.

Additionally, I understand that the TSA has increased the number of crewmembers that will be selected for “random screenings” while the agency conducts an audit of potential insider threats.<sup>6</sup> These random screenings take crewmembers out of the expedited KCM process and into the TSA PreCheck line. While this increased screening is in-effect, I urge the TSA to still utilize the KCM lines to the fullest extent that is consistent with risk-based security. I am concerned that moving crewmembers from the KCM lines to TSA PreCheck strains passenger screening operations. We can and must protect aviation security while balancing the needs of passengers and airline crews.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to continuing to work with you on protecting our nation’s aviation security.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator

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<sup>6</sup> Marsh and Wallace, *supra* note 3.