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U.S. SENATE CLIMATE CHANGE CLEARING HOUSE

United States Senate

October 28, 2013

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The Honorable John S. Pistole
Administrator
Transportation Security Administration
601 South 12th Street
Arlington, VA 20598

Dear Administrator Pistole:

We are writing to you regarding the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) plans to use the Airport Security Plans amendment process to assign responsibility for the monitoring of exit lanes to airport operators. Our review of the proposed amendment has left us with a number of questions regarding the efficacy and appropriateness of the proposed change. In particular, we are concerned about its impact on the security of the flying public, airport employees, and airline crewmembers.

We support TSA's original decision to staff exit lanes with TSA employees and have questions about how TSA's plans could undermine aviation security. We request that TSA respond to the following questions:

1. What percentage of our nation's federalized airports have exit lanes currently staffed by TSA employees? How long have these lanes been staffed by TSA personnel? What is the annual federal fiscal year cost for this staffing?
2. What potential security risk does improperly staffed exit lanes pose to passengers, personnel and aircraft?
3. When and how does TSA plan to implement this change in the responsibility of monitoring exit lanes at airports?
4. Please explain why TSA is implementing this change in responsibility of monitoring exit lanes?
 - a. What specific security conditions have changed to justify such transfer of responsibility?
 - b. Did TSA perform any analysis to justify the reason for this change? If no, why not? If yes, please provide such analysis.

- c. Is the cost of staffing exit lanes one of the reasons precipitating this change? If yes, please include calculations on savings.
5. Why is TSA choosing not to view exit lane monitoring as a screening function given that armed law enforcement officers and known crew members often use the exit lane to enter what is intended to be a sterile area?
6. If TSA no longer has responsibility for monitoring exit lanes, how will TSA ensure that security in sterile areas is maintained? For example, how will TSA ensure that non-TSA employees are qualified to perform this important security function and properly trained?
7. Did TSA consult with stakeholders, including, but not limited to, airports, airlines, pilots, flight attendants, air marshals, and local law enforcement, prior to announcing this change? If no, why not? If yes, please detail the level of consultation, including dates of meetings convened and groups that participated.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. Please provide written responses to these questions no later than November 18, 2013. If you have any questions, please have a member of your staff contact Joseph Wender on Senator Markey's staff at 202-224-2742.

Sincerely,

Edward J. Markey

Elizabeth A. Warren

Richard E. Neal

James P. McGovern

John F. Tierney

Michael E. Capuano

Stephen F. Lynch

Niki S. Tsongas

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