U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, & TRANSPORTATION
SENATOR ROGER WICKER, CHAIRMAN * SENATOR MARIA CANTWELL, RANKING MEMBER

HEARINGS

September 5, 2018

Keeping Our Skies Secure: Oversight of the Transportation Security Administration

106 Dirksen

Ranking Member Bill Nelson Opening Statement

Thank you Mr. Chairman. And Administrator Pekoske, thank you for joining us today.

This committee has been busy with the FAA reauthorization bill, to which we hope to attach TSA-related legislation that we discussed last year. The clock is ticking, but the chairman and I hope we can get these things done soon.

Both the FAA and TSA bills are examples of the Commerce Committee's long tradition of bipartisan collaboration.

As you know, the TSA Modernization Act this committee passed last October focused on improving security at airports by authorizing an increase in the Law Enforcement Officer Reimbursement program, expanding the use of explosive detection canine teams and expediting the deployment of security screening equipment.

We hope that this bill will help the TSA grow its PreCheck program, which has been successful but continues to struggle with enrollment. I look forward to updates you can provide on any of these issues.

I also hope that we can shine some light on the TSA's "Quiet Skies" program, which has been in the news recently. Along with Senator McCaskill, I sent you a letter last week asking for clarification about this program. It's important for us to know the program's details and to be able to share them with the flying public.

Finally, I believe it is imperative that we have a discussion on the ways that the TSA is responding to the emerging threat of 3D-printed guns—undetectable and untraceable firearms.

As we have discussed over the phone, I am concerned about the danger that these weapons pose to our safety wherever we use metal detectors and other similar devices to keep Americans safe—including in airports and on airplanes. I would like to hear how the TSA is addressing this threat.

Again, thank you and I look forward to hearing from you.

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