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April 12, 2016

Honorable Peter Neffenger  
Administrator  
Transportation Security Administration  
601 South 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
Arlington, VA 20598

Dear Administrator Neffenger,

As you may know, in recent months, airport security checkpoints nationwide have encountered exceedingly long lines and extensive wait times for passengers. With heavy travel season quickly approaching, I write to express my concerns about how this could affect the free flow of travel and understand how the Transportation Safety Administration (TSA) intends to mitigate the problem.

In 2015, a Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General report revealed that an internal, undercover investigation conducted by Red Teams – undercover inspectors tasked with identifying weaknesses in the screening process – found that airport screening checkpoints across the nation failed in 67 out of 70, or 95%, of tests to detect threat items. These reports were extremely troubling and unacceptable and demonstrated that the safety of our nation's travelers was clearly at risk. At a time when transportation hubs remain targets for terrorist organizations, I applaud efforts to address these shortfalls, through massive re-training efforts and security protocol revisions. However, it has now become clear that those efforts are also causing immense obstacles in ensuring efficient travel at a time when airports are experiencing record passenger volume. Additionally, it appears that your agency's frontline workforce may be buckling under the pressure of operating under these circumstances while you attempt to hire more agents. I am concerned that TSA's existing hiring practices are cumbersome and unable to meet the pressing mission needs of the agency.

Part of the security line issue also pertains to the TSA PreCheck program that launched in 2012. Customers at our nation's airports are spending their hard earned money to capitalize on a program that promised to ensure them expedited screening at security checkpoints only to find rampant lane closures of PreCheck lanes.

In order to better understand how TSA plans to address the issues going forward, please provide answers to following questions no later than April 26, 2016:

1. How will TSA work to mitigate staffing shortages at Tucson International Airport and other airports during periods of high passenger volume?
2. How does TSA expect passengers to enroll in the PreCheck program when PreCheck lanes are often closed at times when travelers need to utilize them, and how is TSA expanding and marketing the PreCheck program?
3. What are TSA's methods for responding to and adjudicating checkpoint complaints at airports?
4. What is the current size of TSA's National Deployment Force, and how are they being utilized to handle higher passenger volumes?
5. Will TSA be employing increased use of overtime hours in order to bolster staffing at airport security checkpoints during periods of high passenger volume?
6. What are TSA's strategies for implementing efficiencies at the checkpoint while continuing to build a culture of security awareness and stringent adherence to protocol?
7. How is TSA streamlining and enhancing its hiring practices in order to retain a screening workforce of the highest caliber?

Thank you for your attention to this matter and your timely response.

Sincerely,



Martha McSally  
Member of Congress