

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4126

To direct the Transportation Security Administration to carry out covert testing and risk mitigation improvement of aviation security operations, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 25, 2025

Mr. CRANE introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security

A BILL

To direct the Transportation Security Administration to carry out covert testing and risk mitigation improvement of aviation security operations, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Aviation Risk Mitiga-
5 tion and Security Act” or the “ARMS Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. TSA COVERT TESTING AND RISK MITIGATION IM-**
7 **PROVEMENT.**

8 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
9 date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of

1 the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) shall
2 establish the following to strengthen aviation security op-
3 erations:

4 (1) In accordance with subsection (b), a system
5 for conducting risk-informed, headquarters-based
6 covert testing project scenarios for aviation security
7 operations, including relating to airport passenger
8 and baggage security screening operations, that can
9 yield statistically valid data that can be utilized to
10 identify and assess the nature and extent of any
11 vulnerabilities to such operations that are not miti-
12 gated by current security operations.

13 (2) A long-term headquarters-based covert test-
14 ing program, employing static but risk-informed
15 threat vectors, based on annual risk assessments of
16 emerging threats, designed to assess the effective-
17 ness of aviation security operations on an annual
18 basis.

19 (b) METHODOLOGY.—The Administrator of the TSA
20 shall conduct the risk-informed, headquarters-based covert
21 testing project scenarios for aviation security operations
22 under paragraph (1) of subsection (a) based on annual
23 risk assessments of emerging threats. The Administrator
24 shall—

1 (1) conduct not fewer than three such covert
2 testing project scenarios to identify any systemic
3 vulnerabilities in aviation security operations, and
4 ensure that each Category X airport in the United
5 States is included in such covert testing project sce-
6 narios at least once per fiscal year; and

7 (2) document the methodology, assumptions,
8 and rationale guiding the selection and execution of
9 such covert testing project scenarios to ensure statis-
10 tical validity and actionable results.

11 (c) MITIGATION.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the
13 TSA shall establish a process to address and miti-
14 gate any vulnerabilities to aviation security oper-
15 ations identified and assessed pursuant to the covert
16 testing project scenarios conducted under paragraph
17 (1) of subsection (a).

18 (2) ANALYSIS.—Not later than 90 days after
19 identifying a vulnerability referred to in paragraph
20 (1), the Administrator of the TSA shall conduct a
21 root cause analysis to determine the origin and con-
22 tributing factors relating to such vulnerability.

23 (3) DETERMINATION.—Not later than 150 days
24 after conducting the analysis under paragraph (2),
25 the Administrator of the TSA shall make a deter-

mination regarding whether or not to mitigate the vulnerability referred to in such paragraph, and shall prioritize mitigating such vulnerability based on the ability to reduce risk. If the Administrator determines—

(A) to not mitigate such vulnerability, the Administrator shall document the justification relating thereto; or

(B) to mitigate such vulnerability, the Administrator shall establish and document—

(i) key milestones appropriate for the level of effort required to so mitigate such vulnerability; and

(ii) a date by which measures to so mitigate such vulnerability shall be implemented by the TSA.

(4) RETESTING.—Not later than 180 days after the date on which measures to mitigate a vulnerability are completed by the TSA pursuant to paragraph (3)(B)(ii), and to the extent applicable, the Administrator of the TSA shall conduct a covert testing project scenario in accordance with subsection (a)(1) for the aviation security operation with respect to which such vulnerability was identi-

1 fied to assess the effectiveness of such measures to
2 mitigate such vulnerability.

3 (d) ANNUAL REPORTING.—

4 (1) COMPILATION OF TEST RESULTS.—Not
5 later than November 30 of the first full fiscal year
6 that begins after the date of the enactment of this
7 Act and annually thereafter, the Administrator of
8 the TSA, in consultation with the Secretary of
9 Homeland Security, shall produce a report detailing
10 the results of all covert testing project scenarios for
11 aviation security operations under subsection (a)(1)
12 conducted in the immediately preceding fiscal year
13 by the TSA. Each such report shall—

14 (A) be submitted in unclassified form, but
15 may contain a classified annex in accordance
16 with paragraph (2); and

17 (B) include—

18 (i) a summary of all vulnerabilities to
19 aviation security operations that were iden-
20 tified and the respective dates of such
21 identifications;

22 (ii) the status of mitigation efforts
23 under subsection (c), including key mile-
24 stones and expected completion dates;

1 (iii) the results of retesting under
2 such subsection on previously mitigated
3 vulnerabilities;

4 (iv) justifications for vulnerabilities
5 that remain unmitigated under such sub-
6 section, and a determination of whether
7 full mitigation is feasible; and

8 (v) an assessment of security improve-
9 ments based on covert testing data trends.

10 (2) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—The Adminis-
11 trator of the TSA shall submit to the Committee on
12 Homeland Security of the House of Representatives
13 and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and
14 Transportation of the Senate each report required
15 under paragraph (1) together with the Transpor-
16 tation Security Administration’s annual budget re-
17 quest. Each such report may include classified and
18 sensitive security information, and any such infor-
19 mation shall be submitted as a classified annex.

20 (3) PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF COVERT TESTING
21 PERFORMANCE AT CATEGORY X AIRPORTS.—

22 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than Novem-
23 ber 30 of the first full fiscal year that begins
24 after the date of the enactment of this Act and
25 annually thereafter, the Administrator of the

1 TSA shall publish, and maintain on a publicly
2 accessible website of the TSA, a summary of
3 performance data acquired as a result of covert
4 testing project scenarios conducted at Category
5 X airports under subsection (b)(1) during the
6 immediately preceding fiscal year. Each such
7 summary shall—

8 (i) include, at a minimum—

9 (I) the total number of tests car-
10 ried out as part of such covert testing
11 project scenarios conducted at Cat-
12 egory X airports;

13 (II) the aggregate pass rate and
14 failure rate, expressed as percentages,
15 for all such covert tests, calculated
16 across all tested locations and covert
17 testing project scenarios; and

18 (III) general observations or
19 trend data regarding changes in per-
20 formance compared to the prior fiscal
21 year; and

22 (ii) not include test scenario details,
23 methodologies, or airport-specific data that
24 could compromise aviation security oper-
25 ations.

1 (B) EXCEPTION.—Clause (ii) of subpara-
2 graph (A) shall not apply with respect to sum-
3 mary-level statistics regarding the overall per-
4 formance of TSA screening operations at Cat-
5 egory X airports for purposes of public avail-
6 ability of the annual summaries under such
7 subparagraph.

8 (e) GAO REVIEW.—Not later than three years after
9 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller
10 General of the United States shall submit to the Adminis-
11 trator of the TSA, the Committee on Homeland Security
12 of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on
13 Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate a
14 report on the effectiveness of the TSA’s processes for con-
15 ducting covert testing that yields statistically valid data
16 that can be utilized to assess the nature and extent of
17 any vulnerabilities to aviation security operations that are
18 not effectively mitigated by current security operations.

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