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BALANCING PROSPERITY AND SECURITY: CHALLENGES FOR U.S. AIR TRAVEL IN A 21ST CENTURY GLOBAL ECONOMY

HEARING

BEFORE A

SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

SPECIAL HEARING

MARCH 21, 2012—WASHINGTON, DC

Printed for the use of the Committee on Appropriations

Available via the World Wide Web: http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/committee.action?chamber=senate&committee=appropriations

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

85–477 PDF WASHINGTON : 2013

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512–1800; DC area (202) 512–1800
Fax: (202) 512–2104 Mail: Stop IDCC, Washington, DC 20402–0001

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BALANCING PROSPERITY AND SECURITY: CHALLENGES FOR U.S. AIR TRAVEL IN A 21ST CENTURY GLOBAL ECONOMY

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21, 2012

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met at 10:01 a.m., in room SD–138, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Mary L. Landrieu (chairman) presiding.

Present: Senators Landrieu, Lautenberg, Coats, and Murkowski.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR MARY L. LANDRIEU

Senator LANDRIEU. Good morning, and let me call the subcommittee of Homeland Security Appropriations Committee to order.

I am looking forward particularly to our hearing this morning. This is a favorite topic of mine and to many people that I represent, and I am happy to provide the time to air out some of these important issues. I thank my ranking member.

We were notified this morning that there will be a vote on the floor of the Senate at 10:45 a.m. We are going to try to keep this subcommittee moving forward, even as we vote. It just depends on the members and if they are going to be able to attend. Senator Coats has another meeting at 10:30 a.m. So we will just see how it goes, but we are going to try to be accommodating to everyone's schedule.

Let me welcome all of you.

The tourism and travel industry is a substantial component of the U.S. economy. In 2010, it represented 2.7 percent of the country's gross domestic product and 7.5 million jobs. International travel to the United States supports 1.2 million jobs alone. The average overseas visitor spends $4,500 while they are here. And I would venture to say much of that money is spent at relatively small businesses, whether it is restaurants or museums or gift shops, art stores, antique dealers, et cetera. So we want to increase that opportunity for our small businesses here.

Travel is a key economic driver for many of our major cities. According to information from the Department of Commerce, New York City continues to reign as the number one destination for international travelers, commanding a 32-percent share of overseas arrivals. Los Angeles experienced a 33-percent increase during

2010, gaining over 800,000 visitors. Las Vegas saw a 31-percent increase in overseas visitation during 2010, welcoming 570,000 more visitors than the year before. And during the first half of 2011, 446,400 international travelers visited New Orleans, a 6.9-percent increase over the first half of 2010 and the largest jump for us in many years. There are other parts of the country, of course, that benefit as well, but just pointing out those specific destinations.

Today's hearing will focus on the Federal Government's initiatives, primarily the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), but also the Department of State (State Department) in both domestic and international arenas to make air travel as efficient but as convenient as possible but without sacrificing security. The subcommittee will examine the execution of a number of existing programs designed to expedite security screening for air travelers and to improve the arrival process for visitors to the United States.

We will also look at steps the State Department is taking to expedite the issuance of tourist visas. We will also hear from representatives of the private sector who are impacted by these programs.

On January 19, earlier this year, President Obama announced a series of initiatives to enhance travel and tourism to this country. He stated: "Every year, tens of millions of tourists from all over the world come and visit America. The more folks who visit America, the more Americans we can get back to work. We need to help businesses all across the country grow and create jobs, compete, and win. That is how we are going to rebuild an economy where hard work pays off, where responsibility is rewarded, and where everyone can make it if they try." I could not agree more.

Today the U.S. Travel Association is launching a national bus tour at Union Station to highlight many of the issues we will be discussing this morning.

The travel dollar is an integral part of our economy, and we all should want to see it grow. At the same time, we must never forget that planes were, in fact, used as weapons of mass destruction on 9/11, and Congress created the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) in response to those horrific attacks and the continued threat to our Nation's aviation sector that has been widely publicized lately.

However, 10 years after TSA was created, the screening process is viewed by many as overly burdensome. For too long, travelers with low-risk profiles have been screened no differently than those with high-risk profiles in a one-size-fits-all system.

I am pleased to have the Administrator of TSA here today to discuss his efforts to think anew and to move away from that outdated screening model. TSA has launched an expedited screening program for known travelers called PreCheck (Pre✓™). It relaxes screening requirements for children under 12 and this week began relaxing screening procedures for passengers over age 75 and for the military. The plan is to expand Pre✓™ from 11 airports to 35 airports this year. That is good news, but we have many more airports to reach. These efforts have received positive reviews and today we will explore how risk-based screening can be expanded to accommodate more travelers.

TSA is also beginning to expedite access to airplanes for pilots through its crewmember program. I personally believe we must expand this program to include flight attendants. If any group should be considered trusted travelers, it most certainly is our flight crews.

The bottom line is that security and convenience are not mutually exclusive. It is important that pleasure and comfort once again become words that are associated with air travel. Airlines have a big role to play in this, as do airports, but so does the Federal Government.

As someone who has returned from international travel and has been required to stand in long lines without the use of a cell phone for a long time, waiting to clear Customs, I have often wondered what tourists coming to this country for a vacation to see the sights and spend their money must think of this great country of ours if this is their first impression. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers at our Nation's airports are the face of America to these tired travelers. It is important that we be both vigilant and welcoming.

In 2011, more than 91 million travelers to the United States were processed by CBP through international airports. CBP has developed a number of Trusted Traveler programs designed to securely expedite the entry process for frequent travelers. Global Entry allows expedited clearance for preapproved, low-risk travelers who have paid $100 to participate in the program for 5 years and submitted to a more thorough background check. There are currently more than 252,000 members enrolled in Global Entry.

NEXUS is a binational cooperative effort with Canada, similar to Global Entry and valid for land, sea, and air. Currently there are more than 629,000 participants who pay $50 for a 5-year enrollment.

At the direction of Congress, CBP initiated the Model Ports of Entry program in 2007 to make the entry process more streamlined, understandable, and welcoming. It currently operates at 20 major airports, and there are other programs which will be discussed today.

In an effort to promote these activities, we put in our bill last year additional funding—and I thank my co-chair—for 300 CBP officers at new and expanded ports of entry and $10 million above the request for TSA to support risk-based screenings such as Pre✓™. We will get an update, Senator, on that investment today.

The State Department has the primary responsibility for issuing visas to people wishing to travel. The President's January 19 Executive order specifically calls for a 40-percent increase in non-immigrant visa processing capability over the coming year while ensuring that 80 percent of non-immigrant visa applications are interviewed within 3 weeks of their visa application. These benchmarks reflect mandates that I have worked to include in the fiscal year 2012 State and Foreign Operations budget as a member of that subcommittee. These are robust targets. We will want to know what steps the State Department is taking to meet these goals.

On the second panel, we will have a variety of witnesses from the private sector who will discuss how these policies, already implemented by the Government, have improved the travel and entry

process, and equally as important, they will share with the subcommittee their ideas on what more can be and should be done to further improve the ability to visit this country, increase travel, and grow the economy.

I would like to now call on Senator Coats for his opening statement, and then I will turn to Vice Chair Frank Lautenberg when he arrives. And Senator, please and thank you. And I understand you have to leave in about 20 minutes. So thank you.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR DAN COATS

Senator COATS. Madam Chairman, you have suggested we do a rolling coverage so we can keep the subcommittee going. I can work that out. So you go first. I will wait, and then vote when you come back. Then I have got another appropriations hearing that is important to me. But this is important and I want to be here as much as I can. So we will figure that out.

Thank you very much, Madam Chairman, for bringing these people together on this subject. All of us have experienced travel issues, lines at airline counters and self-check kiosks, and delays at boarding gates, lines at security screening and so forth. But we have to remember that 9/11 was a game-changer and that a lot of important adjustments needed to be made in terms of our ensuring that travel and the tourists that do travel and Americans that travel are safe to every extent possible. And so these adjustments have been made—many adjustments and things have been added to our ability to make travel more secure and convenient.

There is this ying and yang that goes back and forth. We all want to balance security with convenience. Everybody wants to be perfectly safe or as safe as possible and at the same time have everything be as convenient as possible. And the members of the first panel that is before us have to deal with these issues every day and finding that balance is a real challenge, and I think we have to recognize that and recognize the efforts that have been made to try to achieve those two goals.

TSA and CBP have a number of initiatives underway, Pre✓™ and Global Entry among them, which could positively impact their ability to concentrate their limited resources on risk-based screening. The State Department is working on an initiative to address visa issuance problems.

There is a ying and yang between our first panel and our second panel. If CBP and TSA schedule too few staff on a shift, resulting in lines and delays for processing and screening, that is a problem. But airline policies and scheduling also play a role in processing and screening. Too few personnel staffing airline self-check kiosks can hold up travelers, as can the impact of an airline's baggage fees. If there are too many international flights scheduled for arrival, say, between 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. at Dulles, this contributes to long lines for processing. And too many flights scheduled for early morning departure or late afternoon arrival or departure contribute to long lines for security screening.

So I am hoping this morning that we will hear concrete, achievable suggestions for improvements. Let me just expand on that. Achievable suggestions for improving processing and screening

while maintaining our security and recognizing budget constraints. This is a real challenge.

We are facing a serious crisis in this country with our Nation's debt and the yearly deficit. It cannot be ignored, and there can no longer be such a thing as a sacred cow. We all have our sacred cows, but when you add them all up, nobody wants to subtract anything. I do not believe the answer to our problems is more taxpayer money sent to Washington. So we need to find innovative ways to be more efficient with the resources we do have.

I note that several of the written testimonies include calls for more Federal staff at airports, mandating in statute a time limit for processing international arriving flights, mandating a time limit for processing visa applications, modernizing Federal information technology systems, providing Federal funding for checked baggage, screening equipment, et cetera. And while many of these suggestions that have been made may be good ideas, most likely most of them will require additional appropriations, which we do not have. They might require increases in fees levied on international airline passengers or visa applicants or even domestic passengers which have, as we know, little if any public support. And most importantly, some of these suggestions have a cost in lowered security.

So do we want CBP watching the clock every time an international flight lands, or do we want them concentrating on assessing the information and the demeanor of each individual who has come off that plane?

Do we want the State Department checking the calendar every day a visa application is in the office, or do we want them making sure that they have found every piece of information they can about a potential visitor or immigrant to this country before making a final decision?

It is not okay to complain about security requirements for visas, airports, or entry into the United States and then demand that they be fundamentally changed when one mishap or one bad guy gets through the system. None of us want to see international travel drop in the wake of a successful terrorist attack the way it did in 2002 in the aftermath of 9/11.

So in conclusion here, we all need to work together to figure out ways to work smarter but not necessarily more expensively or in a way that could compromise security. TSA, CBP, and the State Department need to contribute ideas just like the travel industry, airlines, event planners, and flight attendants need to contribute ideas for all of us to do this while ensuring that the United States remains a safe and preferred destination for international travelers.

I look forward to continuing this discussion on these important issues.

Madam Chairman, I know you and I, Senator Lautenberg, and others on this subcommittee pledge to work with all of you to try to achieve efficiency and effectiveness, at the same time providing security for those who travel from abroad and for Americans who take advantage of this magnificent country by getting on a plane, train, bus to go to places and continue this vibrant and dynamic tourist industry.

I might just say I am happy to see my friend and fellow Indiana Law School graduate, John Pistole, here. We would prefer that nothing happens to interrupt our time between Friday evening 9 p.m. to 11 p.m. when Indiana plays Kentucky in the Sweet 16.

Mr. PISTOLE. Go Hoosiers.

Senator COATS. So to the extent you gentlemen can prevent anything serious from distracting during that timeframe, we would be most appreciative.

Senator LANDRIEU. Senator Lautenberg.

STATEMENT OF SENATOR FRANK R. LAUTENBERG

Senator LAUTENBERG. Thanks, Madam Chairman.

The President set the goal for America to be the top tourist destination in the world, and thanks to the Travel Promotion Act and other new policies, we are well on our way. Tourism is a big business even in my small, most densely populated State of New Jersey. People like to see the wonders of that energetic State, and it continues to be one of the largest and fastest growing businesses in our State. Nationwide the industry is supporting more than 7 million jobs, and in the next 10 years—think of it—travel and tourism will create 1 million more jobs in the United States. And we have to be aggressive in searching those jobs out.

But our tourism industry can only reach its full potential if travelers are confident that they are going to be safe and secure. And as 9/11 showed, a terrorist attack can have a devastating impact on our travel industry, in addition to the tragic human toll.

More than a decade after 9/11, aviation security remains a serious concern, particularly in my home State of New Jersey where we have witnessed security lapses at our airport, Newark Liberty, one of the busiest airports in the country. And one cannot talk about the conditions without remarking about how well our security structure has served. We have had incidents. Incidents, thank goodness, that were interrupted along the way show that our people are there. And Mr. Pistole, you have got a good team out there. We are looking for perfection. Hard to get but essential as a goal.

In one incident a carry-on bag containing a knife got past the TSA agents at the airport.

On another occasion, the passengers were able to enter secure areas without being screened properly. That one did not have a weapon but it did have a love connection. There was one last kiss goodbye and the guy just went under the rope and that was it. They shut the airport down for 1½ hour.

Incidents like these raise concerns about our ability to protect the public as they move through our aviation system.

And I also remain concerned about the ability to scan baggage effectively as airline baggage fees cause passengers to carry on more and bigger bags. And the bottom line is this. We have got to make aviation security our primary mission, but where we can speed up the process and improve efficiency, we must make these investments.

And I look forward to hearing these witnesses today, Madam Chairman, on how we can address the challenges. Thank you.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you so much, Senator Lautenberg.

Let us begin, if we could, with our first panel.

I want to welcome Senator Murkowski who has joined us and we will go through a round of questioning after our panel.

Why do we not start, Mr. Administrator, with you? John Pistole, of course, has testified many times before this subcommittee, as the TSA Administrator. Thomas Winkowski, Acting Deputy Commissioner, CBP; Douglas Smith, Assistant Secretary, DHS for the Private Sector; and David Donahue, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Visa Services. So we will go in the order that I have called you all. John, why do we not begin with you?

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN S. PISTOLE, ADMINISTRATOR, TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Mr. PISTOLE. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman and Vice Chairman Lautenberg, Ranking Member Coats, and Senator Murkowski. Good to see you today.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify as to what TSA's ongoing efforts are to provide the most effective security in the most efficient way for the traveling public.

As you are aware, TSA employs a risk-based, intelligence-driven approach to reduce the vulnerability of the Nation's transportation systems to terrorism. Our goal is to maximize security and we are accomplishing this through an evolving, multi-layered approach.

Really at its core, the concept of risk-based security (RBS), as we say, is an acknowledgment that we are not in the business of eliminating risk associated with traveling from point A to point B. Our objective is to mitigate that risk working with our partners and to reduce the potential for anyone to commit a deliberate act against our transportation systems. RBS enables our dedicated transportation security officers (TSOs) to focus their attention on those travelers we believe are more likely to pose a risk to our transportation network, including those on terrorist watch lists, of course, while providing expedited screening and perhaps a better travel experience to those less likely to pose such a risk.

Through RBS initiatives, TSA is moving closer to its goal of providing the most effective security in the most efficient way possible. While a one-size-fits-all construct was necessary after 9/11, technology and intelligence are facilitating and enabling TSA's move toward an RBS model.

Perhaps the most widely known RBS initiative is TSA Pre✓™. Since first implementing this effort last fall, we have expanded it to 11 airports, including Reagan National and Chicago O'Hare, which both began yesterday. More than 540,000 passengers have experienced expedited physical screening through TSA Pre✓™. Effective partnerships with participating airlines, airports, and CBP all contribute to this initiative's success. Airlines work with us to invite eligible passengers to participate, while CBP works with us to extend TSA Pre✓™ benefits to many members of its Trusted Traveler programs including Global Entry. By the end of 2012, we expect to be offering expedited security screening in 35 of our busiest airports. We also look forward to working with individual airports on initiatives they may have to expand this also.

This subcommittee's support of these efforts has been essential and is much appreciated. In fiscal year 2012, the subcommittee included $10 million to fund necessary upgrades to the Secure Flight

system, a key enabler of TSA Pre✓™. Yesterday at Reagan National, we extended TSA Pre✓™ benefits to Active Duty U.S. Armed Forces members with a common access card (CAC). This initiative also includes Active drilling members of the U.S. National Guard and reservists. These travelers are entrusted to protect and defend our Nation and its citizens with their lives. So this initiative comports with the new law signed by President Obama on January 3 of this year called the Risk-Based Security Screening for Members of the Armed Forces Act.

Internationally CBP, of course, operates 14 aviation preclearance locations. Each of these locations has been or is scheduled to be evaluated by TSA to confirm that preclearance airports are performing checkpoint screening procedures of passengers and accessible property comparable to those of domestic airports. All precleared flights arriving from the 14 preclearance airports are permitted to deplane passengers directly into the sterile area of U.S. airports. At this point, checked bags on connecting domestic flights will continue to be screened by TSA upon arrival until the screening technology and protocols at preclearance airports conform to U.S. standards.

In addition, under the Beyond the Border initiative, TSA and others are working with Transport Canada for mutual recognition of checked baggage screening systems. And that is an initiative that began last month working closely with them.

We are also supporting the expansion of the Known Crewmember initiative, which you mentioned, Madam Chair, an identity-based system which checks uniformed pilots against a database called the Common Access Security System to confirm their identity. We have had 475,000 pilots go through that thus far and look forward to expanding that as that takes hold in the 10 airports and is expanded throughout the country.

In addition, we are committed to using the behavior detection officers to determine whether a traveler needs additional screening.

PREPARED STATEMENT

And finally, we are in the final processes of testing technology to automatically verify passenger identification documents and boarding passes, strengthening our ability to identify altered or fraudulent documents. And we will be deploying that throughout the rest of the year.

Madam Chair, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss RBS and the streamlining process for inbound international passengers.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN S. PISTOLE

Good morning Chairwoman Landrieu, Ranking Member Coats, and distinguished members of the subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today about the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) on-going efforts to develop and implement a comprehensive risk-based approach to secure our Nation's transportation systems, and about Department of Homeland Security (DHS) travel programs to make domestic and international travel more convenient and efficient for passengers without sacrificing security.

TSA employs risk-based, intelligence-driven operations to prevent terrorist attacks and to reduce the vulnerability of the Nation's transportation systems to terrorism. Our goal at all times is to maximize transportation security to stay ahead of evolv-

ing terrorist threats while protecting privacy and facilitating the flow of legitimate commerce. TSA's security measures create a multi-layered system of transportation security that mitigates risk. We continue to evolve our security approach by examining the procedures and technologies we use, how specific security procedures are carried out, and how screening is conducted.

ADOPTING A RISK-BASED SECURITY STRATEGY

Since becoming TSA Administrator, I have solicited the opinions of our key stakeholders and security professionals, our dedicated workforce and our counterparts abroad about how TSA can work better and smarter. Based on this feedback, I directed the agency last fall to begin developing a strategy for enhanced risk-based security (RBS) in all facets of transportation, including passenger screening, air cargo, and surface transportation.

At its core, the concept of RBS demonstrates a progression of the work TSA has been doing throughout its first decade of service to the American people. It is an acknowledgment that we are not in the business of eliminating all risk associated with traveling from point A to point B. Risk is inherent in virtually everything we do. Our objective is to mitigate risk and to reduce, as much as possible without undermining travel and commerce, the potential for anyone to commit a deliberate attack against our transportation systems.

RBS in the passenger screening context allows our dedicated transportation security officers (TSOs) to focus more attention on those travelers we believe are more likely to pose a risk to our transportation network—including those on terrorist watch lists—while providing expedited screening, and perhaps a better travel experience, to those we consider pose less risk.

By utilizing our RBS initiatives, TSA is moving away from a one-size-fits-all security model and closer to its goal of providing the most effective transportation security in the most efficient way possible. While a one-size-fits-all approach was necessary after 9/11 and has been effective over the past decade, two key enablers—technology and intelligence—are allowing TSA to move toward a RBS model.

TSA PRECHECK PROGRAM

Perhaps the most widely known security enhancement we are putting in place is TSA PreCheck (Pre✓™). Since first implementing this idea last Fall, the program has been expanded to nine airports and more than 460,000 passengers around the country have experienced expedited security screening through TSA Pre✓™. The feedback we've been getting is consistently positive.

The success of TSA Pre✓™ has been made possible by the great partnerships with our participating airlines and airports and our sister component, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). The airlines work with us to invite eligible passengers to opt into the initiative, and working with CBP we are able to extend TSA Pre✓™ benefits to any U.S. citizen who is a member of one of CBP's trusted traveler programs, such as Global Entry, SENTRI, or NEXUS. By the end of 2012, TSA expects to be offering passengers in 35 of our Nation's busiest airports the expedited screening benefits associated with TSA Pre✓™.

This subcommittee's support in these efforts has been essential, and it is deeply appreciated. By providing funding for essential technologies and program enhancements, TSA will be positioned to include new airports, air carriers and other populations as participants in TSA Pre✓™. In fiscal year 2012, Congress appropriated an additional $10 million to TSA for upgrades to the Secure Flight system, allowing it to incorporate new populations into the low-risk passenger pool. The fiscal year 2013 President's budget proposal requests $7 million in fiscal year 2013 which will continue to support this new capability.

Under TSA Pre✓™, individuals volunteer information about themselves prior to flying in order to potentially expedite the travel experience. By learning more about travelers through information they voluntarily provide, and combining that information with our multi-layered system of aviation security, TSA can better focus our limited resources on higher risk and unknown passengers. This new screening system holds great potential to strengthen security while significantly enhancing the travel experience, whenever possible, for passengers.

TSA pre-screens TSA Pre✓™ passengers each time they fly through participating airports. If the indicator embedded in their boarding pass reflects eligibility for expedited screening, the passenger is able to use TSA's Pre✓™ lane. Currently, eligible participants include certain frequent flyers from American Airlines and Delta Air Lines as well as existing members of CBP's trusted traveler programs who are U.S. citizens and are flying on participating airlines. We are actively working with other major air carriers, such as United, US Airways, Jet Blue, Hawaiian, and Alas-

ka Airlines, to expand both the number of participating airlines and the number of airports where expedited screening through TSA Pre✓™ is provided. In February, Secretary Napolitano and I announced the national roll out of TSA Pre✓™ and our goal to have the program operating at the 35 busiest domestic airports by the end of 2012.

Because we know more about these passengers, TSA Pre✓™ travelers are able to divest fewer items, which may include leaving on their shoes, jacket, and light outerwear, and may enjoy other modifications to the standard screening process. As always, TSA will continue to incorporate random and unpredictable security measures throughout the security process. At no point are TSA Pre✓™ travelers guaranteed expedited screening.

Earlier this month, we expanded the TSA Pre✓™ population to include Active Duty U.S. Armed Forces members with a Common Access Card, or CAC, traveling out of Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport. Servicemembers will undergo the standard TSA Secure Flight pre-screening, and if we are able to verify the servicemembers are in good standing with the Department of Defense, by scanning their CAC card at the airport, they will receive TSA Pre✓™ screening benefits, such as no longer removing their shoes or light jacket, allowing them to keep their laptops in their cases, and their 3–1–1 compliant bags in a carry-on.

In addition to Active Duty members of the United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, this evaluation will also include Active drilling members of the U.S. National Guard and reservists. U.S. servicemembers are entrusted to protect and defend our Nation and its citizens with their lives. In treating them as trusted travelers, TSA is recognizing that these members pose little risk to aviation security. This evaluation is being conducted in compliance with the "Risk-Based Security Screening for Members of the Armed Forces Act," signed into law by President Obama on January 3, 2012 (Public Law No. 112–86).

Streamlining the Process for Inbound International Passengers

TSA Pre✓™, as mentioned previously, is being extended to any U.S. citizen who is a member of one of CBP's trusted traveler programs.

To further expedite the screening process, CBP currently operates 15 international aviation preclearance locations. Each of these locations has been or is scheduled to be evaluated by TSA to confirm that preclearance airports are performing checkpoint screening procedures of passengers and accessible property comparable to those of domestic airports and are providing an equivalent level of protection. All precleared flights arriving from the 15 preclearance airports are permitted to deplane passengers directly into the sterile area of U.S. airports. However, connecting passengers' checked baggage intended for connecting domestic flights must still be screened by TSA upon arrival in the United States, until the screening technology and protocols at the preclearance airports conform to TSA domestic checked baggage requirements.

To that end, under the Beyond the Border (BTB) initiative, in accordance with a joint declaration signed by President Obama and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper on February 4, 2011, TSA and the National Security Staff (NSS) have been working with Transport Canada (TC) toward mutual recognition of the two countries' checked baggage screening systems. Under an action plan, released last December, Canada's eight preclearance airports (Calgary, Edmonton, Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver, and Winnipeg) have initiated the process to upgrade their checked baggage screening equipment to TSA-certified explosives detection system (EDS) equipment as the primary checked baggage screening equipment. According to the BTB Action Plan, this upgrade, partnered with comparable implementation of TSA-equivalent policies and procedures, will make it unnecessary to rescreen checked bags from these Canadian airports when the passengers connect in the United States to other flights.

This upgrading process began on February 11, 2012, and is scheduled to be completed at all Canadian preclearance airports by March 31, 2015. TSA will conduct a site visit of each preclearance airport in Canada to ensure checked baggage screening procedures provide an equivalent level of protection.

Additional Security Initiatives

The following additional recent initiatives to enhance security complement those discussed above.

Known Crewmember.—To build on our risk-based approach to security, we are currently supporting efforts to test another identity-based system to enable TSOs to positively verify the identity and employment status of airplane pilots. The Known Crewmember program is the result of a joint operation between the airline industry (Airlines for America) and pilots (Air Line Pilots Association, Inter-

national), which allows uniformed pilots from 22 airlines to show two forms of identification that are checked against a database called the "Cockpit Access Security System," which confirms identity. After more than 2 months into the pilot program, and with deployments nearly complete at the seven participating airports, over 59,000 uniformed pilots have been cleared through the process, with an average of nearly 1,900 approvals per day. Like TSA Pre✓™, Known Crewmember is a clear example of TSA's commitment to focusing its attention and resources on those who present the greatest risk, thereby improving security and the travel experience for passengers across the country.

Expanded Behavior Detection.—TSA took steps last fall to expand its behavior detection program that builds on the existing Screening of Passengers by Observation Techniques (SPOT) program, which has grown since 2003 to include over 160 airports. Under the Expanded Behavior Detection pilot program, TSOs employ specialized behavioral analysis techniques to determine if a traveler should be referred for additional screening at the checkpoint. The vast majority of passengers at the pilot airport checkpoints experience a "casual greeting" conversation with a behavior detection officer (BDO) as they pass through travel document verification. This additional interaction, used by security agencies worldwide, enables officers to better verify or dispel concerns about suspicious behavior and anomalies.

Preliminary analysis from Boston, where the pilot is currently being conducted, shows an increase in the rate of detection of high-risk passengers. However, additional data is required to understand if the trend seen in the Boston data is statistically significant and replicable at other airports. TSA is currently conducting analyses with the DHS Science and Technology Directorate to estimate the number of cases required for validation. In the meantime, we have expanded the pilot program to Detroit to collect additional data on incorporating enhanced real-time risk assessments into our other layers of security.

New Document Assessment Technology.—In addition to testing new procedures for low-risk populations, TSA is also employing technology to automatically verify passenger identification documents and boarding passes, providing TSA with a greater ability to identify altered or fraudulent documents. This technology, known as Credential Authentication Technology—Boarding Pass Scanning Systems (CAT–BPSS), will eventually replace the current procedure used by security officers to detect fraudulent or altered documents. CAT–BPSS enhances security and increases efficiency by automatically comparing a passenger's ID and boarding pass to a set of security features to concurrently authenticate them and ensure that the information on both match. The system can screen a wide range of travel documents. TSA began testing the technology in July 2011 and will deploy and evaluate the technology at airports in the near future.

CONCLUSION

As we review and evaluate the effectiveness of these aviation security enhancements, additional changes to the security screening process may be implemented in the future as TSA continues to work toward providing all travelers with the most effective security in the most efficient way possible. Of course, TSA will always retain the ability to incorporate random and unpredictable security measures throughout the airport, and no individual is ever guaranteed expedited screening.

We appreciate the ongoing support and cooperation of the aviation industry and the traveling public as we strive to continue strengthening transportation security and improving, whenever possible, the overall travel experience for all Americans. The interconnectedness and interdependence of the global economy requires that every aspect in aviation security spectrum be as strong as possible. Whether it is for business or for pleasure, the freedom to travel from place to place is fundamental to our way of life, and to do so securely is a goal to which everyone at TSA is fully committed.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss RBS, the streamlining process for inbound international passengers, and TSA's additional security initiatives.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you so much.

Tom.

STATEMENT OF THOMAS S. WINKOWSKI, ACTING DEPUTY COMMISSIONER, CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROTECTION

Good morning, Chairman Landrieu, Vice Chair Lautenberg, Senator Coats, and distinguished members of the subcommittee.

It is an honor to appear before you today on behalf of the men and women of CBP to discuss the important work we do to secure and facilitate the flow of passengers into the United States.

CBP has worked to improve the entry process for visitors to the United States, reengineering the way we process travelers while also increasing security and expediting the flow of legitimate travel.

Today I would like to highlight how we are transforming our business model, enhancing professionalism, and pursuing advanced targeting initiatives to provide a safer, more welcoming environment for visitors coming to the United States.

In the area of transforming our business model, CBP is continuing to transform the way we do business at our ports of entry. For instance, our Trusted Traveler programs expedite processing for low-risk, preapproved travelers upon arrival. These programs include SENTRI, NEXUS, and Global Entry and have nearly 1.3 million travelers enrolled.

Global Entry, our newest program, allows members to bypass the regular lines and instead use self-service automated kiosks at 30 airports. Approximately 4,500 travelers use the kiosks each day, which allows CBP to make more efficient use of resources to secure and facilitate the flow of passengers. Global Entry typifies the unprecedented partnership we have forged with the travel industry. Together we have promoted Global Entry through community outreach events, advertisements, press releases, media events, and partnerships with airports and airlines. And as Administrator Pistole indicated, we have also partnered with the TSA to pilot the Pre✓™ screening concept, which Global Entry is an integral part of.

In the area of automation, CBP is continually exploring automation opportunities that will bring efficiencies to passenger processing and make more efficient use of resources. The Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) enables DHS to conduct enhanced screening of visa waiver program travelers through a fully automated online system. This not only helps us determine the eligibility of travelers under the visa waiver program, it allows us to eliminate the paper I–94W. This has resulted in a 58-percent faster processing time and helped us meet these demands of increased passenger volumes. CBP is actively working to automate and eliminate the I–94 form for other visitors as soon as possible.

In the area of professionalism, a CBP officer is the first face an international traveler sees on arrival, as you indicated, Chairman, and we work actively to promote customer service while maintaining our important law enforcement focus. At the 20 model airports, CBP has installed audio and video technology to display informational and welcoming videos for travelers. There are also uniformed CBP Passenger Service Managers on site who act as key advocates for promoting traveler satisfaction.

Our work is paying off. A traveler satisfaction survey was conducted in late 2011, which shows that travelers recognize our improvements and are satisfied with our overall arrival process. Nearly 90 percent of the travelers agreed that CBP officers are welcoming, provide travelers with the right information, and provide entry processing within a short and reasonable time period. CBP

is working directly with industry partners to develop and maintain an ongoing survey process.

CBP closely monitors traveler wait times and strives to process arrivals quickly and as securely as possible. On a typical day, CBP processes more than 240,000 incoming international air passengers, and we expect air travel to continue its increasing trends. Our current statistics show that 88 percent of travelers wait less than 45 minutes for CBP processing and 73 percent of travelers wait less than 30 minutes. Although we have achieved some efficiencies, CBP is committed to doing better.

The search for efficiencies not only contributes to better customer service, it helps us work smarter in a tight budget environment. This is especially important because CBP relies on user fee collections to fund more than 35 percent of our front-line CBP officers, and that is about 7,200 CBP officers. With the fluctuations in travel, that leaves us with a less predictable source of funding for more than one-third of our personnel.

We are identifying staffing requirements through a workload staffing model and evaluating alternative funding strategies. Now, the workload staffing model employs a data-driven methodology for identifying staffing requirements at all ports of entry. It also captures future staffing needs for new and expanded facilities and technology deployment.

In the area of advanced targeting initiatives——

Senator LANDRIEU. Tom, try to wrap, if you could. Go ahead. Take 15 more seconds.

Mr. WINKOWSKI. In the area of advanced targeting initiatives, we have made great strides. As you have indicated, our travelers need to feel safe and we need to make sure that we provide the right oversight from the standpoint of keeping dangerous people off our airplanes.

PREPARED STATEMENT

So in conclusion, I appreciate the opportunity to come here today and I look forward to your questions.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THOMAS S. WINKOWSKI

Chairman Landrieu, Ranking Member Coats, Vice Chairman Lautenberg, distinguished members of the subcommittee, it is an honor to appear before you today to discuss the work of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to secure and facilitate the flow of passengers and trade into the United States. We have created several programs specifically for this purpose, and it is my pleasure to share some of them with you today.

CBP is engaged in a series of business transformation initiatives to make our inspection processes more effective and efficient. These initiatives involve evaluating core processes, incorporating technology enhancements, assessing utilization of law enforcement staffing, and developing additional automation efforts. Above all, we remain committed to our multi-layered approach, to include:

—*Transforming Our Business Model.*—CBP is working hard to efficiently transform our processes and business models to optimize our current resources.

—*Professionalism and Model Ports.*—CBP is revamping our strategies operationally to promote a more responsive workforce that makes the arrivals process easier and more welcoming.

—*Advanced Targeting Initiatives.*—CBP is proactively working with our security partners to identify security risks and threats abroad before they reach our borders. Prevention of these threats is a crucial part of our strategy to ensure travel remains safe and secure.

BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

CBP has collaborated with industry partners, airlines, and airport stakeholders to identify opportunities that will promote travel to the United States and improve the traveler experience. We continue to implement new programs that facilitate travelers' arrivals while making the most effective use of our resources. These programs are discussed in greater detail below.

Trusted Traveler Programs

Trusted Traveler Programs have been essential to our risk-based approach to facilitate the flow of travelers into the United States. They provide expedited immigration, customs, and agriculture processing upon arrival in the United States for pre-approved, low-risk participants through the use of secure and exclusive dedicated lanes and automated kiosks. These programs are predicated on the thorough vetting of travelers who have voluntarily applied for membership, paid a fee, and provided personal data (including biographic information, photos, and fingerprints) to CBP.

CBP officers ensure that comprehensive database checks have been conducted against terrorist watchlist records, criminal history records, active wants/warrants; previous customs, immigration, or agriculture violations; investigatory records; and other law enforcement records. Participants are vetted every 24 hours to ensure no new derogatory information has been identified, and are subject to law enforcement checks every time they use one of the program-dedicated lanes or kiosks to enter the United States.

Applicants are denied participation if any disqualifying information is uncovered during the application process, or at any time during the traveler's membership period. Applicants may also be denied if they are suspected of being involved in any illicit activity or present a potential risk for terrorism, criminality, or smuggling.

Currently, almost 1.3 million travelers are enrolled in CBP's four trusted traveler programs: Secure Electronic Network for Travelers Rapid Inspection (SENTRI), Free and Secure Trade (FAST), NEXUS, and Global Entry.

—For travelers at our southern land border with Mexico, SENTRI provides expedited processing for pre-approved, low-risk travelers through dedicated commuter lanes. CBP has developed and distributed a new, enhanced, trusted-traveler card with increased security features to all SENTRI members. SENTRI cards are Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI)-compliant documents for entry into the United States by land or sea, and also provide expedited travel to the United States and Mexico.

—FAST expedites the processing and release of approved commercial truck drivers making fully qualified trips between the United States and Canada or to the United States from Mexico. Commercial trucks using FAST lane processing must be a Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C–TPAT)-approved carrier; carrying qualifying goods destined for a C–TPAT-approved importer; be driven by an individual in possession of a valid FAST-commercial driver card; and have a high-security seal. On the southern border, manufacturers must also be C–TPAT-approved in order for shipments to qualify for FAST release.

—NEXUS provides expedited CBP processing for pre-approved, low-risk travelers at pre-clearance airports, land border, and seaport crossings between the United States and Canada. NEXUS cards are WHTI-compliant documents for land and sea travel, as well as air travel when traveling to and from airports using the NEXUS program.

—Global Entry allows expedited clearance for pre-approved, low-risk air travelers upon arrival in the United States. Global Entry is available to U.S. citizens and U.S. lawful permanent residents, Canadian citizens and permanent residents, Dutch citizens enrolled in the Privium program, Mexican citizens, and citizens of the United Kingdom, Germany, and Qatar through limited pilot programs. In addition, CBP has entered into joint arrangements with South Korea and Panama to allow their qualifying citizens and permanent residents to participate in Global Entry.

Global Entry is an example of unprecedented partnership with private industry, airlines, and airport authorities. Pre-approved, low-risk air travelers may enter the United States by using automated kiosks located at one of the 20 selected airports. Global Entry allows vetted air passengers to clear CBP inspectional processing much faster than general passenger processing. Global Entry membership now includes those travelers enrolled in NEXUS and SENTRI, and the program has surpassed 940,600 eligible users with over 4,000 daily uses. Global Entry automated kiosks have been used over 2 million times—saving over 42,400 inspectional hours that CBP has reallocated to focus on the regular traveler queues. With Global

Entry, CBP is able to focus resources on travelers about whom DHS knows the least, therefore providing overall enhanced screening to the traveling public.

Last month, CBP published the Global Entry Final Rule, which makes this highly successful program permanent. The rule expands Global Entry to allow children under the age of 14 to participate, allowing more families to enjoy the benefits of the program. In 2012, CBP will expand the number of airports participating in the program to 24 airports.

Collaborative Efforts

Strong partnerships with the travel industry allow CBP to leverage different customer bases to identify frequent travelers and potential Global Entry members. We have promoted the Global Entry program using advertisements, press releases, media events, and partnerships with airlines and conducted community outreach to raise awareness of the program. Recognizing the benefits of the program, some travel providers now reimburse top-tier customers for Global Entry application fees and we are working with others to expand enrollment.

CBP also continues to work with our stakeholders to improve the inspection process in ports of entry at airports. This effort includes implementing new programs like Express Connection and One-Stop. Both of these programs work cooperatively with the air carriers and airports to expedite travel—they reduce missed connections, increase passenger throughput, and enhance the arrival processing experience.

Express Connection is designed to facilitate the processing of travelers with closely scheduled connecting flights to reduce missed connections, and is available at 11 of the Nation's busiest airports. Working closely with participating airlines, CBP dedicates personnel to identify and direct pre-selected travelers who can use designated Express Connection primary booths.

Through our One-Stop program, airport operators and airlines provide a streamlined processing option for those travelers who have no checked luggage. Dedicated lanes provided by CBP for One-Stop identified travelers are located at Houston (IAH) and New York City (JFK) International Airports. CBP is pleased with the initial success of the Express Connection and One-Stop programs, and is considering further expansion of each.

Our partners at TSA are applying intelligence-driven, risk-based screening methods to domestic travel to improve security and expedite travel for those passengers about whom we know the most. The TSA Pre✓™ initiative broadens the scope of benefits available to CBP Trusted Travelers by enabling expedited screening at dedicated lanes within TSA Pre✓™ airports. Going forward, CBP and TSA will continue to work together to strengthen security while significantly enhancing the travel experience for low-risk travelers.

Automation and Technology

CBP is continually exploring additional automation opportunities that will provide greater efficiencies in the passenger processing environment while allowing for a more effective use of existing resources. Some changes that we have adopted range from new technologies to eliminating unnecessary paperwork, saving inspection hours for CBP officers.

The Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) is a security enhancement to the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) that was developed pursuant to the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007. ESTA is a fully automated travel authorization system used to collect information from travelers planning to travel by air or sea to the United States under the VWP. An approved ESTA application is mandatory for all VWP travelers prior to commencing travel by air or sea to the United States. The information submitted by applicants is screened against appropriate law enforcement databases, including the terrorist watch list, to determine the eligibility of travelers to travel to the United States under the VWP, and whether such travel poses a law enforcement or security risk.

Through ESTA, CBP was able to automate the I–94W form, which was previously used by over 60 percent of travelers arriving by air to the United States, and eliminate the paper form. The result is 58 percent faster processing time for travelers under the VWP. This time savings has resulted in more efficient processing in most airports and has helped CBP meet the demands of increased passenger volumes. CBP is currently working with DHS partners to automate the standard I–94 form used by all other, non-VWP visitors entering the United States.

There have also been many automation improvements in the land environment through our Land Border Initiative (LBI). Radio frequency identification (RFID) technology, improved license plate readers, and the Vehicle Primary Client remain the key to facilitating travel by allowing traveler information to be pre-positioned

for our officers and automatically queried via law enforcement databases as the vehicle approaches the primary inspection. Vehicle Primary Client is a next generation computer upgrade that allowed CBP officers to quickly verify the validity of travel documents and make determinations regarding the admissibility of persons. Simultaneously, WHTI increases the security of U.S. land borders by requiring travelers to present a securely issued travel document, which can be verified electronically in real-time, to establish identity and citizenship.

The use of RFID technology and the promotion of new RFID document options allows for the transition of travelers from less efficient to more efficient processing methods. Passenger name law enforcement queries stemming from RFID travel documents are 20 percent faster than queries conducted with a machine readable document and 60 percent faster than a manual entry with a paper document such as a birth certificate. As of February 2012, there are more than 13 million RFID-enabled documents in the hands of travelers. As part of WHTI, CBP greatly increased its use of technology in the land border environment; this technology is now integral to CBP operations, providing clear security and facilitation benefits.

PROFESSIONALISM AND MODEL PORTS

CBP and our travel industry partners have worked together to improve processes for welcoming travelers into our country while maintaining the highest levels of security and professionalism. CBP has taken a proactive management approach in addressing passenger processing issues and is constantly working in partnership with airport authorities, airlines, and the travel industry to identify new ways to more efficiently facilitate the entry process.

Model Ports

The Model Ports program was created to make the entry process more streamlined, understandable, and welcoming. The program is in place at the top 20 airports by volume: Washington-Dulles, Houston (IAH), Atlanta, Boston, Dallas/Ft. Worth, Chicago (ORD), Detroit, Ft. Lauderdale, Honolulu, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, Newark, New York (JFK), Orlando, Philadelphia, Sanford (FL), San Juan, San Francisco, and Seattle.

Some of those best practices of the Model Ports program include the establishment of the Passenger Service Manager (PSM) position, a key advocate for promoting traveler satisfaction. The PSM is a uniformed CBP manager able to: respond to traveler complaints or concerns; oversee issues related to travelers requiring special processing; observe overall traveler processing; address issues on site as they occur; and provide recommendations for improvement of traveler processing and professionalism. The PSM also provides training to managers, supervisors, and officers on customer service and professionalism issues; collects and analyzes reports concerning professionalism and traveler satisfaction; and promotes public awareness of the CBP mission through distribution of public information bulletins, brochures, and comment cards.

There are full-time PSMs stationed at each of the 20 Model Ports. Photographs and contact information for all PSMs are prominently displayed for maximum traveler visibility and access. In partnership with airport authorities and airlines, CBP also implemented the use of special service representatives to aid in directing travelers to open CBP primary booths and ensure CBP forms are completed prior to arrival in the processing area. Under the program, we have also significantly improved signage that is clear and concise for international travelers.

CBP has installed and implemented audio and video technology in the passport primary queuing area in order to display CBP's informational video, "Welcome to the United States 'Simple as 1, 2, 3'," which presents travelers with step-by-step instructions on what to expect during CBP processing. The video is subtitled in eight languages and is seen by over 25 million visitors each year. CBP also partnered with Walt Disney Corporation to create a video at our Model Ports depicting images of America that provide a warm welcome to arriving visitors and resonate with U.S. citizens returning home.

Another example of successful partnership with industry partners and stakeholders resulted in significant improvements to the facilities at the Orlando International Airport. A working group that included DHS agencies, the Port of Orlando, and private sector participants resulted in improved queuing, streamlined signage, a more welcoming interior decor, and foreign-language-speaking passenger facilitation. This local effort is considered a model for ports across the country and we are looking to highlight similar efforts in the future.

Traveler Satisfaction Survey

As a result of CBP's commitment to improve customer service, CBP and the DHS Private Sector Office developed and deployed a traveler satisfaction survey to benchmark passenger satisfaction at the 20 Model Ports of Entry. The survey was conducted by Medforce Government Solutions (MGS), under a CBP contract, to evaluate CBP's performance in achieving Model Port goals.

The traveler satisfaction survey for all 20 Model Ports began in October 2011 and was completed in November 2011. MGS used personal digital assistant (PDA) devices to collect data from English-speaking travelers; travelers speaking other languages were given paper surveys. The survey findings indicate that:

—Nearly 90 percent of travelers agree that CBP officers are welcoming;
—Over 90 percent of travelers agree that CBP is providing the right information to travelers, at the right time and in a hospitable manner;
—Over 80 percent of travelers agree that CBP is creating a calm, pleasant Customs waiting area; and
—Nearly 90 percent of travelers feel that the entry processing time is either short or reasonable.

Travelers have expressed high satisfaction with the way CBP is managing its entry process and providing timely and friendly customer service. We are still analyzing the results of this survey and working directly with industry partners to develop and maintain an ongoing survey process to maintain a feedback loop with our travelers so that improvements continue.

Aligned with the customer service survey initiative, CBP revitalized the comment card program. Comment cards are available in the CBP areas at airports and can be filled out by travelers wishing to express their views of CBP processing. Each card is collected and the results are shared with the ports of entry, and if necessary referred for additional investigation. CBP has improved the format of the card made the cards more accessible to the traveling public, provided more analysis and feedback for the ports of entry, and taken corrective action where necessary.

Reducing Wait Times

In addition to proven improvements to the traveler experience, we closely monitor wait times for international travelers. CBP strives to process arriving travelers, regardless of the port environment, as quickly as possible while maintaining the highest standards of security.

Current statistics show that the 88 percent of travelers wait less than 45 minutes for processing and 73 percent of travelers wait less than 30 minutes for processing at airports. The national wait time average in fiscal year 2011 was about 22 minutes.

Although CBP continues to address ways to manage wait times, other issues affect wait times, including concurrent arrivals that exceed the capacity of the airport and the need to staff multiple terminals. To address these challenges, CBP is implementing an aggressive, multi-pronged mitigation strategy to enhance air passenger facilitation over the near and mid term. The near term strategy includes:

—More effective use of existing resources;
—Partnerships with carriers and airport authorities on facilitation measures; and
—Enhanced risk segmentation through increases in trusted traveler program membership.

In the mid-term, CBP will focus on optimizing front-line staffing resources and transforming business processes. Critical elements of this strategy include:

—Transforming and reengineering current business processes;
—Implementing alternative funding strategies to expand services at requesting locations; and
—Accurately identifying staffing requirements through a rigorous, audited, workload staffing model.

Our port directors identify peak processing periods well in advance based on historical data and real time operational information provided by carriers and airport authorities. With this advanced information, directors make appropriate operational adjustments, including restricting annual leave and administrative functions during peak processing periods, expanding pre-primary roving operations, utilizing cargo lanes for passenger processing as much as possible, and adjusting individual schedules and lane assignments.

The airport wait time console is used to report on primary processing passenger wait times at the top 63 air ports of entry. This data is based on measurements of time intervals between the arrival of the aircraft and the processing of the passenger on primary. The wait time for each arriving passenger is recorded, and aggregates of these wait times may be obtained based on the individual flight, class of admission, time of day, or any other data element associated with an arriving air

passenger. CBP reports wait times on our public Web site, and we continue to refine the reporting.

The airport wait time console real time flightboard utilizes live data feeds from multiple sources to create a view of passenger arrival data that allows CBP field operations personnel to make optimal staffing decisions. By taking into account such factors as aircraft arrival time, facility constraints, as well as passenger volume and admission class, CBP field operations management is able to foresee how changes in any of the elements will require corresponding adjustments to staffing in order to meet our passenger wait time goals. CBP is currently testing this program at airports such as JFK and LAX, and we expect to expand the program to additional airports later this year.

Workload Staffing Model

CBP is also developing a workload staffing model (WSM), employing a rigorous, data-driven methodology for identifying staffing requirements at the air, land, and sea ports. The WSM considers all business processes required of CBPOs, the workload associated with those business processes, and the true level of effort required to effectively carry out the mission on a daily basis. The WSM identifies the suggested personnel necessary to accomplish the critical daily mission, and it also captures future staffing requirements for new or enhanced facilities and technology deployments.

Professionalism: Enhanced CBP Officer Training

CBP has also improved its training of CBP officers to ensure the highest level of professionalism. In 2008, CBP began working on a comprehensive basic training program for new officers. This new training program was launched in February 2011. The new curriculum includes three mandatory components: a 15-day pre-academy, an 89-day basic academy and a post-academy training program that ends as the trainee completes his or her probationary period.

The goal of these programs is to produce a professional law enforcement officer who possesses the skills necessary to effectively carryout CBP's critical mission. The programs prepare trainees mentally, physically, and ethically to meet the challenges and demands of a law enforcement position and equips them with the specific skills needed to perform their duties with a high level of competence.

Partnership With Brand USA

CBP is committed to the goal of facilitating lawful travel and fully supports efforts to expand legitimate travel and tourism to the United States. In support of these efforts, CBP has worked with Brand USA (formerly the Corporation for Travel Promotion) since it was established by the Travel Promotion Act of 2009. Brand USA was created for the purpose of encouraging travelers from all over the world to visit the United States of America. The public-private marketing entity was created in 2010 to work in close partnership with the travel industry maximizing the social and economic benefit of travel in communities around the country. CBP works closely with Brand USA to promote CBP programs such as ESTA and Global Entry and to identify ways of improving the traveler experience at U.S. ports of entry based on feedback from the customer satisfaction survey.

Proposal To Seek Reimbursement Authority for Outlier Services

CBP believes that providing additional services that are not currently offered such as service for additional flights, new airports, or land border crossings and pre-clearance operations are in the best interest of the traveling public and economic prosperity. The current statutory limitations on CBP's authority to receive outside funding, except in narrowly defined instances, have prevented us from receiving reimbursement from private sector and international, State, and local partners. In turn, CBP has had to deny requested services or the provision of services without reimbursement. Therefore, through the fiscal year 2013 budget request, we are seeking the passage of a proposal that provides the necessary authority to consider and approve the provision of inspectional services for full reimbursement at domestic or international airports, seaports, land border environments other than user fee facilities currently defined in 19 U.S.C. section 58(b). The underlying objective is to allow CBP to provide additional services at ports that it otherwise could not provide without reimbursement.

ADVANCED TARGETING INITIATIVES

CBP has also placed a great emphasis in targeting potential security and law enforcement threats prior to their arrival in the United States and specifically, prior to boarding a U.S.-bound flight through its pre-departure targeting strategy. To ac-

complish this strategy, CBP has expanded and reorganized operations at the National Targeting Centers, enhanced the Immigration Advisory Program (IAP), increased international partnerships, and participated in new initiatives such as the U.S.-Canada Beyond the Border plan.

National Targeting Center

The NTC was established in November 2001 in response to the 9/11 attacks to provide advance passenger targeting, research, and coordination among numerous law enforcement and intelligence agencies on a 24/7 basis in support of the CBP anti-terrorism mission. Following the attempted bombing of Northwest flight 253 in December 2009, the NTC re-engineered its targeting operations with an increased emphasis on pre-departure targeting and interdiction, outbound targeting, and the re-vetting of previously issued U.S. visas.

To increase its focus on pre-departure, the NTC not only expanded its operations significantly, but also accelerated its response time. The additional workload and time-sensitive analysis required process, technical, and resource enhancements. As a result, CBP has had to maximize the effectiveness of advanced technology and information, intelligence, databases (classified, law enforcement, commercial, and open-source), domestic and international partnerships, and well-trained human resources to effectively screen, review, identify, and prioritize passengers, cargo, and agriculture across all international modes of transportation, inbound and outbound.

Immigration Advisory Program and Regional Carrier Liaison Groups

The Immigration Advisory Program is a partnership between DHS/CBP, foreign governments, and commercial air carriers to identify and prevent high-risk travelers who are likely to be inadmissible into the United States from boarding U.S.-bound flights. CBP officer teams are deployed to work with foreign law enforcement and air carriers at key airports in host countries. IAP teams work collaboratively to identify high-risk passengers with targeting support from the NTC and/or an assessment of passengers and their documentation. IAP extends the zone of security beyond the physical borders; CBP officer presence in foreign locations provides the on-site capability to question and assess travelers and serve as a direct liaison with foreign authorities.

The Regional Carrier Liaison Groups (RCLG), located at airports in New York (JFK), Miami, and Honolulu, also work closely with carriers to provide information prior to passenger travel. Using various targeting methods, they prevent passengers who may be inadmissible, or who possess fraudulent documents, from traveling to the United States. Recommendations are made to the carriers regarding suspect travelers.

The work of the IAP and RCLG has resulted in substantial savings for both carriers and the U.S. Government. The Federal Government saves costs associated with processing and detention of inadmissible persons, while carriers can avoid fines associated with bringing improperly documented aliens.

Preclearance

Preclearance provides for the inspection and clearance of commercial air passengers and their goods prior to departure from 15 foreign locations in five countries in support of CBP's extended border strategy. All mission requirements (agriculture, customs, and immigration) are completed at preclearance locations prior to departure enabling CBP to prevent inadmissible travelers and prohibited goods from entering the United States, and to protect U.S. agricultural infrastructure from foreign pests, disease and global outbreaks. Preclearance supports CBP's initiative to extend the borders outward and is part of the DHS strategic plan to deploy technology systems overseas to detect radiological threats before they leave foreign territories.

A preclearance inspection is the same inspection an individual would experience at any United States port of entry, except it is conducted on foreign territory. As a result, the individual does not have to undergo a United States Government inspection again upon arrival in the United States. Instead, the traveler merely arrives at a United States domestic terminal facility and either connects to a United States domestic flight or leaves the airport.

Passengers are afforded the benefits of making quick domestic and international connections and by having their checked luggage automatically transferred between flights by air carriers without being claimed. Meanwhile, United States airports enjoy the benefit of reduced passenger delays in the international arrival area.

CONCLUSION

CBP is a world-class law enforcement agency—every day we are working to keep air, land, and maritime travel safe and secure, while providing professional services

to our travelers. Air travel has increased by 3 percent in the past year, requiring more efficient processing for our travelers. As the industry is expected to grow even further in the coming year, we are positioned to respond with improved customer service and greater efficiency while engaging in techniques that identify threats before they arrive in the United States. We are holding CBP officers to a higher standard of professionalism and interpersonal conduct. Further, we will continue to take a proactive approach and engage in programs and initiatives that enhance security and expedite the flow of legitimate travel. Through business transformation, professionalism, and targeting initiatives, CBP is working to realize our goals and maintain traveler confidence that we are doing our best to keep air travel safe and secure.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you so much.

Doug.

STATEMENT OF DOUGLAS A. SMITH, ASSISTANT SECRETARY, PRIVATE SECTOR OFFICE, DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Chairman Landrieu.

The timing of this hearing could not be better. I was thrilled to hear you mention the President's announcement in Orlando last month. As important as that announcement and calling attention to travel and tourism is who is at this table. We are not just here today as a one-time deal. The four of us literally talk every single day.

In my role as the Secretary's Assistant Secretary for the Private Sector, what she looks for me to do is to coordinate across the entire Department and the interagency how to best work with the travel industry. As important are the people sitting behind me: Roger Dow, Airlines for America (A4A), and all of our partners in the travel industry. We are reaching out to them and working with them every single day looking for ways to create better efficiencies, looking at ways to increase throughput at airports, but to your point, Senator Coats, never compromising security. We firmly believe we can have both. It is the standard the President and the Secretary of Homeland Security hold us to. We can do both. We can facilitate travel to the highest degree possible and at the same time keep America safe whether it is for exciting events, Senator, next week in your hometown, the final four, perhaps we need a follow-up hearing, Senator Coats, down there in New Orleans for the final four championships.

Senator LANDRIEU. Good idea. I should have thought of that.

Mr. SMITH. In New Jersey in the work we are doing at Newark International Airport to expedite travelers through so when they take those long flights back from Singapore, they are not standing in lines.

We are committed across the entire Federal enterprise to continue to raise the bar.

Since we came into office 3 years ago, we have put exciting programs into place. In fact, we have now through the programs such as Global Entry, TSA Pre✓™, broken the million-person mark of people that have those benefits. These people with those expedited travel benefits are already showing what can happen at our airports.

What we are doing in Orlando in the Model Ports program—the lessons learned there, we have been able to take across the country. I held a field hearing down there about 1 year ago, brought in

20 stakeholders from Walt Disney World, Universal Orlando, Gatorland, the airport authority, local members down there to talk about how we could improve the system, how we could make the welcoming experience better. Everybody came together. The achievements we learned there and working it across the Federal Government and our private-sector partners has given us the learnings to take across the country to not just the top 20 airports in the Model Ports program, but where we are expanding.

There is a lot of work to do and we realize that, but it is this partnership that I can say has never been stronger. My partners in the private industry are not shy about reaching out and calling on a regular basis. But we are not shy about asking for help, asking for their help, and helping us grow our expedited traveler programs, helping us think through ways to better market to consumers.

We are in the security business at DHS. My colleagues, Tom Winkowski and Administrator Pistole, are the best that there are. We rely on their counsel on a daily basis. But it is an integrated team, a team that extends to the United States Secret Service, to Immigration and Customs Enforcement, to the Coast Guard, and looks at innovative solutions to help keep the country safe and at the same time support our friends in the travel industry as they work diligently to grow this incredibly important driver of our economy.

I know this week you will be talking to some of your colleagues on the possible expansion on the visa waiver program. It is a program we watch carefully. As you know, we have talked with many of your colleagues on areas in that program. It is an important tool. But there are many tools out there.

With the time I have left, the one thing I would like to stress is it is about a partnership. We are committed. We are putting everything we have against this. Whether it is Secretary Napolitano, Secretary Salazar, Secretary Bryson in chairing the Travel and Tourism Advisory Board, the President, we are putting all that we have against it. But it is a partnership with private industry, with the administration, and with the Congress. Your colleagues, Senator Blunt and Senator Klobuchar, in chairing the Travel and Tourism Caucus in the Senate, have been phenomenal partners with the insights and the ideas they have given us. Your colleagues over on the House, Congressman Bonner and Congressman Farr, are equally supportive in giving us ideas. But that is how we are going to improve.

To your point, Senator Coats, you are right. Budgets are not growing. They are shrinking and it is why we need to continue to close ranks, be as creative as we can to work with what we have. We could always use more. Everybody knows that. But we are confident that in working closely in these partnerships with private industry, with the Congress, across the administration, we will continue to find efficiencies and support the absolute critical path of growing tourism into this country.

PREPARED STATEMENT

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to your questions.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DOUGLAS A. SMITH

Chairman Landrieu, Vice Chairman Lautenberg, Senator Coats, and distinguished members of the subcommittee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today about the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) current major travel initiatives.

My name is Douglas Smith, and I am the Assistant Secretary for the Private Sector at DHS. I am the primary advisor to the Secretary on how DHS impacts the private sector, opportunities for public-private partnership, and how DHS impacts the economy.

In my capacity as the Assistant Secretary for the Private Sector, I have served as the Department's representative on interagency working groups on travel and tourism, such as the Tourism Policy Council and the recently established Task Force on Travel and Competitiveness. Additionally, I am the DHS ex-officio member of the U.S. Travel and Tourism Advisory Board (TTAB), which advises the U.S. Government on policies and programs that affect the travel and tourism industry. I also serve on the President's Export Council on travel and tourism issues

Given the President's recent Executive Order 13597, "Establishing Visa and Foreign Visitor Processing Goals and the Task Force on Travel and Competitiveness," and the growth of a number of DHS travel and tourism-related programs and initiatives, today's hearing is especially timely.

THE DEPARTMENT'S EFFORTS ON TRAVEL AND TOURISM

At the onset, I want to stress DHS's commitment to the President's critically important initiative. There is no better area in which to showcase our dual goal of economic and national security than our work to foster and facilitate travel to and within the United States. My testimony will provide a brief overview of DHS support of the larger U.S. Government effort to foster and facilitate a thriving travel and tourism industry, the engagement my office has had with our private sector partners, and the steps DHS is taking to improve the traveler experience.

Every year tens of millions of tourists from all over the world travel to see firsthand this great country. DHS plays a primary role in the facilitation of what amounted to a $134 billion industry in 2010. We secure passengers and their luggage before they board planes, we screen travelers as they enter our borders, and we play an important role in the visa process, among many other responsibilities. This is why Secretary Napolitano has made the facilitation and security of travel and tourism a priority for the Department. We are taking concrete steps at the President's direction, and are working closely with Congress and the Office of Management and Budget, to boost America's tourism industry so that we can grow our economy and create more jobs while continuing to secure our country. At DHS we believe the goals of economic prosperity and national security are fundamentally intertwined.

At the interagency level, Federal Government collaboration to foster travel and tourism has never been stronger. President Obama's Executive order on January 19, 2012, has resulted in a coordinated interagency effort to streamline the visa issuance process, strengthen the Visa Waiver Program and trusted traveler programs, provide useful and accessible travel information online, and develop our country's first National Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Strategy. Through the interagency leadership of Secretary of Commerce Bryson and Secretary of the Interior Salazar, DHS works every day toward these commitments.

I am also proud to say DHS is continuously striving to meaningfully incorporate and involve the travel and tourism industry in the policy-making process. Some of the stakeholders we regularly work with include the U.S. Travel Association, Airports Council International, Airlines for America, and—because this is a global effort—the International Air Transport Association (IATA). As Secretary Napolitano's representative to the TTAB, I work to ensure DHS has a formal, structured working relationship with the travel industry, engaging businesses on issues that matter most to industry. When the TTAB submits recommendations on behalf of industry, we not only share those perspectives with the appropriate program managers and leadership within DHS, but we also work with industry to leverage their expertise and partnership in identifying solutions to their recommendations. We have worked with businesses to share their best practices on customer service and queue management, promote DHS programs and initiatives, and we have even encouraged our ports of entry to engage and work directly with their industry stakeholders. Through our work with the TTAB and others, the travel and tourism industry is fully engaged in operations and policies that impact them. Agency-wide DHS is responsive to their needs and concerns. We are focused on making America as safe

and as easy as possible to visit, and we view industry as a resource and a critical partner in this effort.

THE TRAVELER EXPERIENCE

The Department is working at each step of the travel experience to increase the number of legitimate travelers to the United States and facilitate their journey and entry in a safe and efficient way. I will describe examples pre-arrival, on arrival, and while traveling within the United States.

As potential tourists are making their travel plans, DHS is a part of the effort to promote the United States as the destination of choice. In fiscal year 2011, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) managed the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) fee which collected over $116 million for the Corporation for Travel Promotion. ESTA fees are paid by travelers seeking to enter the United States under the Visa Waiver Program. The corporation, established by the 2010 Travel Promotion Act, is a public-private organization charged with promoting travel to the United States. The CBP ESTA Program is expected to collect the same amount, if not more, this fiscal year. My colleagues at CBP and I are closely engaged in that effort as the Corporation for Travel Promotion implements its global marketing strategy "BrandUSA." In addition, as directed by the President's Executive order, the interagency Task Force on Travel and Competitiveness, is developing a National Travel and Tourism Strategy to promote domestic and international travel opportunities to and throughout the United States.

After foreign tourists decide to travel to the United States, many must apply for a visa. DHS is currently collaborating with the Department of State (DoS) to strengthen visa processing, and facilitate legitimate travel and tourism. Under a new pilot, in select circumstances, qualified foreign visitors who were interviewed and thoroughly screened in conjunction with a prior visa application may be able to renew their visas without undergoing another interview. All applicants will still undergo thorough screening against inter-agency databases. However, this initiative will free resources to interview more first-time applicants. The resulting reduced visa application wait times are expected to encourage travel and tourism to the United States, especially among travelers from emerging markets. DHS is committed to supporting DoS in its goal to increase by 40 percent nonimmigrant visa processing capacity in China and Brazil specifically.

When visitors arrive at our borders, CBP is improving the arrivals experience to make it more welcoming. Working with some of the most recognized brands in the tourism industry, CBP has improved passenger service training for our front-line officers, streamlined signage at our ports of entry, and implemented programs to speed passenger traffic through Federal Inspection Services areas.

In addition to our internal efforts to make the ports of entry more welcoming, DHS recognizes that each port is unique in its facilities and the airlines, passengers, and local industry that it serves. For this reason, we have emphasized the importance of local external collaboration at each port of entry, where local companies, the airport authority, and DHS entities can engage in dialogue and work together to improve the port at the field level. Our first effort launched in Orlando, where DHS and the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority worked with the local travel and tourism industry to improve the signage and port facilities. Out of this partnership, DHS was also able to accommodate a new daily flight from Brazil to Orlando. This flight currently brings more than 200 tourists to Orlando every day. Local industry estimates this flight will have a $100 million annual economic impact. More achievements like this will be accomplished through collaboration at the local level, when airport, industry, and DHS entities are able to meet shared challenges and opportunities together.

A cornerstone of the Department's efforts to provide a more efficient and welcoming experience for travelers entering the country is Global Entry. This program facilitates expedited clearance for pre-approved, low-risk travelers through the use of automated kiosks. CBP now has surpassed 940,600 eligible users enrolled in the Global Entry program with over 4,000 daily uses. Travelers have used automated Global Entry kiosks in more than 2 million transactions at 22 airports, freeing more than 42,400 inspection hours that DHS has re-allocated to focus on the regular passenger queues. The result is reduced wait times for all passengers. Global Entry will soon expand to additional airports, serving approximately 97 percent of international travelers, and now allows children under 14 to participate for the first time. Global Entry also benefits from our engagement with business. Working with credit card companies, hotel companies, and airlines to promote the program to their most loyal customers has resulted in significantly increased enrollment volumes.

Within the United States, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has implemented a new passenger pre-screening pilot TSA PreCheck (Pre✓™) to facilitate expedited checkpoint screening at select domestic airports. TSA Pre✓™ is open to any U.S. citizen who is a member of one of CBP's trusted traveler programs, such as Global Entry, SENTRI, or NEXUS at participating airports and airlines. While this program is currently only available to U.S. citizens on domestic flights, TSA Pre✓™ allows TSA to better allocate limited resources and focus on higher risk passengers, further streamlining the travel experience.

The examples above illustrate how DHS is working to foster and facilitate a thriving travel and tourism industry, while maintaining the highest security standards, across the entire tourism experience—from pre-trip planning, to domestic travel. DHS continues to welcome the input and engagement of private sector and congressional stakeholders, as well as the traveling public to pursue our mission in an increasingly innovative, efficient, and effective way.

CONCLUSION

Chairman Landrieu, Vice Chairman Lautenberg, Senator Coats, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you again for this opportunity to testify on behalf of the Department of Homeland Security. DHS is committed to the whole-of-government effort to support a thriving travel and tourism industry so significant to our economy while maintaining the highest standards of security. I thank the subcommittee for its support of the Department's efforts.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you so much, Doug. I really sincerely appreciate your enthusiasm and your focus and the administration's focus on this because it is a significant part of our responsibility to keep the country secure but also to grow jobs, and this is a very important part of our economy.

I am going to turn this over to my vice chair and the good hands of my ranking member, and Mr. Donahue, if you will proceed. I am going to go early for the vote and then come back. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF DAVID T. DONAHUE, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR VISA SERVICES, DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. DONAHUE. Good morning, Vice Chairman Lautenberg, fellow Hoosier, Ranking Member Coats, and Senator Murkowski. Lots of Hoosiers in the room today.

Thank you for calling this important hearing today. My testimony will focus on the State Department's role in facilitating legitimate travel of international visitors to the United States as a part of the administrations' broader initiatives as outlined in Executive Order 13597.

I have also submitted my full written statement to be entered into the record.

Streamlining access to U.S. Visa Services will complement our collective efforts to capture a greater share of the global tourism market. The visa application process is a small but important component of this effort. In the last year, more than 62 million foreign visitors entered the United States according to the Department of Commerce. About 60 percent of travelers entered legally without visas, another 20 percent on previously issued visas, and only about 12 percent on visas obtained just before their travel.

The Executive order directs the State Department to increase visa adjudication capacity in China and Brazil by 40 percent and to ensure that consular officers interview 80 percent of applicants worldwide within 3 weeks of submitting their applications. I am pleased to testify today that we are meeting this challenge without compromising the security of our Nation's borders or the safety of our fellow citizens.

In fiscal year 2011, consular officers adjudicated 17 percent more non-immigrant visas than the previous year. The growing demand for non-immigrant visas in China and Brazil alone is astonishing. In China, consular officers processed more than 1 million non-immigrant visa applications last year; in Brazil, more than 800,000 applications, which was a 42-percent increase from the year before.

In line with the Executive order to increase our visa application capacity, we are adding over 100 visa adjudicators this year and next in China and Brazil, both Foreign Service officers and new hires through a pilot limited non-career appointment program that targets applicants who already speak Mandarin and Portuguese. We expect the first group of these special hires to arrive at post in China and Brazil in the next couple of weeks.

We have reduced and are maintaining short wait times in Brazil and China while processing 64 percent more cases in Brazil and 34 percent more cases in China. And today our wait times in China are all under 8 days, and in Brazil we have 35 days in Sao Paulo despite huge increases in visa processing, 21 days in Brasilia, and 14 days in Recife, and Rio de Janeiro. We are working to push those numbers down. They work Saturday in Sao Paulo to get another 1,500 to come up to Disney World and other places they want to come in the United States.

I want to assure you that we are planning and preparing to handle the growing demand for visas from fast-growing economies. We are expanding our facilities, adding a total of 48 new interview windows throughout China and 19 in Brazil. We are assessing the feasibility of opening more consulates in Brazil and China. Our teams were recently on the ground in these countries to assess the new consulate locations. Of course, we need the cooperation of the host governments of those countries to carry this through.

We are continually looking for more efficient ways to improve the applicant's experience particularly since a trip to the Embassy is often the foreign visitors first impression of the United States.

With DHS concurrence on January 19, 2012, the State Department and DHS initiated a 2-year pilot program to streamline visa processing for low-risk applicants based on terms and conditions agreed between our agencies and implemented in accordance with the Immigration and Nationality Act requirements. The pilot program permits officers to waive interviews for certain categories of qualified visa applicants. This program is focused mainly on visa renewal applicants and is in the process of being implemented at some of our busiest overseas posts, including Brazil, China, Mexico, India, and Russia. We are working with our partners in the U.S. Government to consider additional countries for membership in the visa waiver program.

In addition to our ongoing efforts to streamline the visa application process, the State Department will continue working to promote travel in the United States through a cadre of economic and commercial officers, as well as our public and cultural affairs officers who are identifying key audiences and ensuring the message about travel to the United States reach them in the most appropriate context, formats, and languages.

As President Obama has said, we will always protect our borders, our shores, and our tourist destinations from people who

want to do us harm, but we want to get more international tourists coming to America. And there is no reason we cannot do both. The State Department is firmly committed to supporting the President's travel and tourism initiatives, opening the door to new jobs and exports. We have a priority to make it a priority to increase our capacity while maintaining strict security standards. Every visa adjudication is a national security decision.

PREPARED STATEMENT

This concludes my testimony today, and I will be pleased to take your questions.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID T. DONAHUE

Chairman Landrieu, Ranking Member Coats, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, it is a distinct honor to appear before you to share the accomplishments of my colleagues in the Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs, and our efforts to facilitate the legitimate travel of millions of tourists, business people, students, and other visitors to the United States.

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S ROLE IN TRAVEL AND TOURISM PROMOTION

The nonimmigrant visa application process is a small but important component of the combined effort to attract more overseas travelers to the United States. In fiscal year 2011, more than 62 million international visitors entered the United States, according to the Department of Commerce. Around 60 to 65 percent enter legally without visas (Canadians and Visa Waiver Program travelers); most others enter with multiple entry nonimmigrant visas issued in prior years. Only about 12 percent of travelers obtained new nonimmigrant visas just before travel. Streamlining access to U.S. visa services will complement the administration's effort to capture a greater share of the global travel and tourism market, a multifaceted effort extending far beyond improving our visa adjudication capacity.

In partnership with the Task Force on Travel and Competitiveness and the Corporation for Travel Promotion, the Department of State is playing a key role in promoting increased international travel to the United States. In addition to our ongoing efforts to streamline the nonimmigrant application process, we actively promote travel to the United States through our cadre of more than 1,200 economic and commercial officers working to establish and maintain new patterns of international economic cooperation. We promote America as a destination for overseas visitors through our public and cultural affairs officers who are identifying key audiences and ensuring that messages about travel to the United States reach them in the most appropriate contexts, formats, and languages.

The Department of State looks forward to working with the Tourism Policy Council and the Corporation for Travel Promotion to encourage new and repeat travelers to the United States.

RESPONDING TO INCREASING WORLDWIDE DEMAND FOR U.S. VISAS

We at the Department of State are dedicated to the protection of our borders, and have no higher priority than the safety of our fellow citizens. At the same time, we are committed to facilitating legitimate travel, and providing prompt and courteous service. For the Bureau of Consular Affairs, the challenge is to meet the increasing worldwide demand for U.S. visas without compromising the security of our Nation's borders. I am pleased to testify that we are meeting this challenge head on.

Consular officers adjudicated 8.8 million nonimmigrant visa applications and issued more than 7.5 million U.S. visas in fiscal year 2011, an increase of more than 16 percent over the previous year, when 6.4 million visas were issued. We have seen tremendous increases in demand for visas in some of the world's fastest growing economies. We are issuing as many visas as we did in 2000, even though nine more countries have joined the Visa Waiver Program since then.

According to the Department of Commerce, international visitors contributed $134 billion to the U.S. economy in 2010, supporting more than a million jobs. More international travel means more spending on airlines, tours, hotels, services, and export purchases, all of which mean more American jobs. Not only do international tour-

ists, business visitors, and students boost our economy, but these visitors also leave our country with a better understanding of American culture and values.

The greatest growth in travel comes from the world's fastest growing economies, including China and Brazil, where we have seen demand for U.S. visas increase at a dramatic pace. In fiscal year 2011, we processed approximately 1 million nonimmigrant visas in China, and more than 800,000 nonimmigrant visas in Brazil. This represented a 34-percent increase in processing for China over the previous fiscal year, and a 42-percent increase in processing for Brazil during the same period, an accomplishment in meeting workload demand that would be hard to match, even in the private sector. And, we issue nonimmigrant visas to almost 90 percent of Chinese applicants, and to over 96 percent of Brazilian applicants.

In the first 4 months of fiscal year 2012 alone, consular officers in China processed 33 percent more nonimmigrant visa applications, and consular officers in Brazil handled 62 percent more over the same time period in fiscal year 2011. Although we have taken several steps to meet this growing demand since 2010, we are continuing to implement additional measures to streamline the nonimmigrant visa application process. In fact, we recently submitted a plan to President Obama outlining the steps we will take in 2012 to increase our capacity in Brazil and China by 40 percent, and to ensure that consular officers interview 80 percent of nonimmigrant applicants worldwide within 3 weeks of submitting their applications—goals the President directed us to achieve through Executive Order 13597. I would like to update you on the details of these efforts.

MEETING DEMAND, ESPECIALLY IN CHINA AND BRAZIL

The Department of State is keeping pace with growing demand for visas, and continues to dedicate more personnel and resources to visa adjudication, focusing on embassies and consulates with the greatest resource needs. Specifically, we are committed to increasing nonimmigrant visa adjudication capacity by 40 percent in 2012 in both China and Brazil, two countries where we have seen the greatest increase in visa demand:

—The Department is adding over 100 visa adjudicators this year and next in China and Brazil. A number of these new adjudicators are being hired through a pilot program that targets applicants who already speak Mandarin or Portuguese. We expect the first group of these special hires to arrive at posts in China and Brazil by April 2012. A second group will follow in summer 2012.

—Some posts in China and Brazil are operating double shifts to maximize use of the facilities. Working bilaterally with host governments, the Department is also working to physically expand and improve our visa-processing facilities to allow for even more visa applicant interviews.

—The Department is using many different tools to expand capacity, including advanced technology to maximize efficiency and improve security-related screening. By consolidating some of the non-security-related consular functions, we are increasing capacity at our embassies and consulates.

The results of these efforts are already evident. The staffing increases and internal efficiency measures have all but eliminated backlogs in China, and have significantly reduced the backlog of cases in Brazil, where wait times have come down well below the previous highs of more than 100 days, to as low as a week or less at some posts. As of today, average interview wait times for nonimmigrant visas at our Embassy and our consulates in Brazil are below 30 days, and a week or less at our posts in China.

Since 2005, consular officer staffing has doubled in Brazil. Since fiscal year 2008, we have sent more than 185 officers and 57 support staff to Brazil on temporary assignments to meet short-term staffing needs, providing an additional 5,702 days of service. Our consulate in Sao Paulo began extended interview hours in August, and other Brazilian posts are expected to follow. Sao Paulo increased from 2,000 interviews per day to 3,000 per day. The U.S. Consulate General in Rio increased from 1,000 interviews per day to 2,000 interviews per day. We hosted two "Super Saturday" events at consular posts across Brazil, adjudicating almost 8,000 visa applications in those 2 days, and consular officers in Brasilia adjudicated hundreds of visas during two Brazilian holidays in November.

We are working to expand and remodel our consular facilities as permitted by the Chinese and Brazilian governments, so that we can interview more visa applicants on a daily basis. In September, a team from the Department participated in a 2-week site survey to improve and expand existing consular facilities in Brazil, and another team traveled to China in January 2012. We are adding a total of 48 new interview windows throughout China and 19 in Brazil. This expansion, which will

extend into 2013, will increase capacity by more than 60 percent in China and more than 30 percent in Brazil.

In addition, we are assessing the feasibility of establishing more visa-issuing locations in Brazil and China.

The Department is utilizing limited non-career appointments (LNA) to hire visa adjudicators with essential language skills in Mandarin or Portuguese. LNA hires meet the strict qualifications of foreign service officers, including security and background checks. They enter service speaking fluent Mandarin or Portuguese, allowing them to begin work as soon as they have completed our intensive consular training program. They are appointed for 1-year periods for a total of no more than 5 consecutive years, and have the same privileges and responsibilities as other consular adjudicators. We plan to hire over 50 LNAs over the next 2 years. Every 10 LNAs could potentially adjudicate 150,000 more visas per year.

We also prioritize groups of travelers, such as students and business visitors. Wait times for student visa interview appointments worldwide are less than 15 days. We prioritize student visa appointments because of the tremendous intellectual, social, and economic benefits foreign students provide to the U.S. economy. According to the Department of Commerce, international students contributed nearly $20 billion to the U.S. economy during the 2009–2010 academic year. All U.S. embassies and consulates have established procedures to expedite appointments for business travelers. U.S. officials work closely with American Chambers of Commerce in more than 100 countries to streamline the visa process for business travelers.

We use advanced technology to maximize efficiency and improve security-related screening. Our worldwide Global Support Strategy (GSS) contract makes interview appointment scheduling transparent and consistent. It also eliminates the user-pay scheduling programs that exist in many countries. In order to create additional capacity, GSS moves some non-security-related consular functions off-site. By shifting non-security functions out of the consular section, it frees our staff to pay more attention to security concerns. GSS is already in place in many countries.

We have worked to reduce or eliminate paper from all aspects of visa processing, winning awards for our green initiatives. Our nonimmigrant visa application is now completed and submitted online, and we are piloting a Web-based immigrant visa application.

THE ROLE OF SECURITY HAS NOT DIMINISHED

Security remains our primary mission, since every visa decision is a national security decision. We have an intensive visa screening process incorporating personal interviews with multiple biographic and biometric checks, all supported by a sophisticated global information technology network, which shares data with other U.S. Government national security agencies in real time. We continue to work with the law enforcement and intelligence communities to ensure that our officers have the latest information on whether an applicant poses a threat. Around the world, at 222 visa-issuing embassies and consulates, a highly trained corps of consular officers and support staff process millions of visa applications each year, facilitating legitimate travel while protecting our borders.

We instruct our staff that their highest priority must be to protect the United States and its citizens. The officers are also trained to be courteous, respectful, knowledgeable, and efficient. We ensure that these principles are core tenets of our training regimen for new consular officers and visa adjudicators. Our visa adjudication courses feature in-depth interviewing and name-checking technique training, fraud prevention, and the use of automated systems. Throughout their careers, consular officers receive continuing instruction in all of these disciplines to ensure they integrate the latest regulations and technologies into their visa adjudication decisions. Our aim is to keep the visa process secure, efficient, and as simple as possible for all those who wish to visit our great Nation.

INTERVIEWS

The Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) generally requires our consular officers to interview in person all first-time visa applicants aged 14 through 79, but gives consular officers authority to waive interviews for diplomatic and official applicants from foreign governments and, in limited circumstances, some repeat applicants. The INA also allows the Secretary of State to waive interviews in certain situations.

Among the provisions in the Department's fiscal year 2012 budget was a request that the Department explore alternative measures to meet the personal interview requirement, such as video visa interviewing. We appreciate Senator Landrieu's interest in this topic, which we have also explored at length. We concluded that video

visa interviewing is simply not a viable option. We have piloted this technology and have found it does not meet our strict security requirements, is costly, and is less efficient than in-person interviews. Use of this technology requires off-site facilities manned by American personnel with security clearances, and therefore subject to costly physical security and data-protection requirements.

Permission to open such facilities and the legal status of employees could be an issue in some countries. We found that moving applicants to and from the camera location, and limiting the length of the interview, is more challenging at an off-site video facility, thereby reducing the overall number of interviews conducted.

Consular officers are trained to use all of their senses to spot potential fraud or threats that might not be as readily observable over a two-dimensional video link. Much like the final in-person interview before hiring a new employee, if there is any concern about a visa applicant, an in-person interview is the best way to resolve the case.

We are continually looking for more efficient ways to improve the applicant's experience, without compromising security, particularly since a trip to the Embassy is often a foreign visitor's first impression of the United States. One way to accomplish this, among other things, is to decrease the number of people in the waiting room. Enhanced security screening in effect since September 11 makes it possible to eliminate interviews for certain very limited categories of applicants, without compromising border security requirements.

With DHS concurrence, on January 19, 2012, the Departments of State and Homeland Security initiated a 2-year pilot program to streamline visa processing for low-risk applicants, based on terms and conditions agreed between our agencies and implemented in accordance with INA requirements. Under the pilot program, consular officers may waive interviews for certain categories of qualified nonimmigrant visa applicants worldwide who are renewing their visas within 48 months of the expiration of their previously held visa, and within the same classification as the previous visa (i.e., a B1/B2 applicant must apply for another B1/B2 visa). Consular officers also may waive the interview and fingerprint collection requirement for certain qualified nonimmigrant visa applicants holding Brazilian passports worldwide who are younger than 16 years old or 66 years of age and older, so long as the required thorough screening against biographic-based, immigration, law enforcement, and intelligence databases raises no concerns.

Officers will only exercise this waiver authority after a careful review of the application, and a thorough screening of the applicant against inter-agency databases, and in alignment with appropriate programmatic quality control measures.

This new policy will make it much easier for many tourists, particularly Chinese travelers, to renew their visas, helping to free up over 100,000 interview appointments for travelers applying for visas for the first time. That increase in tourism could support as many as 1,500 travel and tourism-related jobs. For Brazilian applicants, the program will permit consular officers to more effectively spend their time and resources evaluating higher risk visa applicants and other applicants who require interviews. The pilot program has been implemented in China and is in the process of being implemented at some of our busiest overseas posts, including Brazil, Mexico, India, and Russia.

RECIPROCITY

The Immigration and Nationality Act also requires us to set visa validity based on the validity of visas issued to U.S. citizens. We coordinate these decisions with the Department of Homeland Security. Right now, the Chinese generally issue Americans visas valid for 1 year or less. U.S. Ambassador to China Locke regularly addresses the issue of visa validity with the Chinese Government, with the goal of extending visa validity for American travelers from 12 months to 2 or more years, so that we can reciprocate and issue longer validity visas for Chinese leisure and business travelers.

The Department does not act alone when it comes to decisions about visa validity; we must obtain approval from the Department of Homeland Security prior to increasing any period of visa validity.

In addition to granting reciprocal treatment to U.S. citizens seeking visas to visit China, it has been the administration's position that the Chinese Government also must make significant progress in issuing travel documentation to thousands of Chinese nationals in the United States under final deportation orders.

VISA WAIVER PROGRAM

We are working with our partners in the U.S. Government to consider additional countries for membership in the Visa Waiver Program (VWP), which is administered

by the Department of Homeland Security. The specific requirements for VWP membership are set forth in law and are quite strict; these statutory requirements help to make VWP the secure program that it is. The Secretary of State recently nominated Taiwan to join the VWP and the Department of Homeland Security has begun the review process for its admission to the program. We support S. 2046, the Visa Waiver Program Enhanced Security and Reform Act, currently being considered in the Senate, which would enhance and strengthen the VWP.

CONCLUSION

We believe that promotion of legitimate travel, trade, and educational exchanges are not in conflict with our border security agenda, but rather further that agenda and U.S. interests in the long term.

Visa adjudication requires good judgment, insight into cultural practices, and knowledge of immigration law. Visa adjudication is essential to protecting the safety of our citizens, legal permanent residents, and those who visit our country.

Our global presence, foreign policy mission, and personnel structure give us singular advantages in executing the visa function throughout the world. Our authorities and responsibilities enable us to provide a global perspective to the visa process and its impact on U.S. national interests. The issuance and refusal of visas has a direct impact on our foreign relations as well as our economy. The Department of State is in a position to anticipate and weigh all those factors, while ensuring border security as our first priority. We will continue to staff up, build, and innovate to ensure that America continues to be a secure and welcoming country.

At the same time, as President Obama has said, "We will always protect our borders and our shores and our tourist destinations from people who want to do us harm. But we also want to get more international tourists coming to America. And there's no reason why we can't do both." The Department of State is firmly committed to supporting the President's travel and tourism initiatives, opening the door to new jobs and exports. More international visitors to America means more revenue for our cities and States, and we are making it easier for tourists from other countries to experience all that America has to offer. We have made it a priority to increase our capacity while maintaining our strict security standards, and we will continue to reduce wait times and facilitate increasing numbers of legitimate travelers to the United States.

This concludes my testimony today. I will be pleased to take your questions.

NEWARK LIBERTY AIRPORT: STAFFING

Senator LAUTENBERG [presiding]. Thank you very much.

Mr. Winkowski, according to the reports that we get from Newark Liberty Airport, arriving passengers are experiencing long wait times at Customs due to inadequate staffing, and I think you confirmed that in your remarks. With the busy summer travel approaching, there are concerns about whether or not these times will continue to grow. And it is fairly simple, as I see it, if we can get a commitment, Mr. Winkowski, that you commit to working with me and with us to boost the staffing at Newark. Can we count on that?

Mr. WINKOWSKI. I think there are several issues with Newark. When you look at the staffing of last year versus this year, they have had a decrease in on-board staffing of three people. Now, that is not to say that the number that they have is the right number, and I think that is your point, Senator.

We are committed to work with the port authority, certainly your office, as well as the airlines.

We face a number of challenges, and one of the challenges that I believe Senator Coats raised is the co-issue of peaking from the standpoint of aircraft coming in at the same time, maxing out facilities.

I think where we are heading with this is really in three areas, and I think we need to look at what we are doing from a stand-

point of transforming our whole process. I do not believe that the whole process is based on more people. Certainly in some cases, that would be accurate. But we have to make sure that we continue to capitalize on the whole issue of transforming what we are doing in the entire continuum of travel and clearing international passengers.

So a number of areas. Global Entry. We need to drive up that number. We have a big group of travelers that come in that are very, very low-risk, and we need to get them into the Global Entry system so we can take that group of travelers, get them out of the line, get them over to a bank of kiosks, and walk out the door.

The other area is the elimination of these forms that we have. So, for example, when we put the ESTA system up, we were able to eliminate the I–94W. That saves a lot of time. We are working very, very hard in eliminating the I–94, and we anticipate being able to do that by this year and doing other initiatives——

Senator LAUTENBERG. I would ask that you put this in the form a report because the question, as it was posed, was developed by my people and the facts that govern there that there was a shortage of staff.

Now, I do not know whether we can alter arrival times for aircraft. The airplanes want to arrive on a schedule that is most convenient for them and for certainly their passengers.

So if you would, sir, because the time is so limited, and I would like to ask Mr. Pistole a question, if I can.

Mr. WINKOWSKI. Okay.

[The information follows:]

STAFFING AND WAIT TIMES AT NEWARK LIBERTY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Based on the volume of inbound international passengers, Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR) is the fourth busiest international airport in the United States.

Over the last 3 fiscal years, wait times at EWR have risen along with those at most major international airports. From first quarter of fiscal year 2009 to first quarter of fiscal year 2012, EWR's average wait time and the overall national average wait time increased by approximately 27 percent. Increasing wait times can be attributed to a number of challenges, including:

—Dramatic return of passenger volume after the global economic downturn. Fiscal year 2011 saw 95 million passengers and crew processed at CBP's international airports—the highest total on record.

—Expanding facilities and mission requirements that impact the capacity of CBP officer resources.

EWR wait times track closely to—and slightly below—the national average:

—National average wait time (first fiscal year 2012) = 21.7 minutes.

—EWR average wait time (first quarter fiscal year 2012) = 21.2 minutes.

EWR's peak arrival time for flights and passengers is the 3 p.m. hour. Average wait time during that hour (first quarter fiscal year 2012) = 30.0 minutes. Most recently, EWR wait times have decreased as CBP implements its wait time mitigation strategy, which includes:

—More precisely aligning staffing to daily workload, including using an automated real-time scheduling tool. EWR maximizes the staffing of its inspection booths in anticipation of peak arrival periods.

—Limiting leave usage, administrative functions and training during peak arrival times.

—Working with air carriers, airport authorities, the trade community, and others on facilitation measures such as Express Connect and One Stop. These programs expedite travel, reduce missed connections, increase passenger throughput, and enhance the arrival processing experience.

—Increasing participation in Global Entry, one of CBP's Trusted Traveler Programs to increase the number of pre-vetted travelers to allow CBP to focus fi-

nite resources on those individuals that may present a higher risk. Travelers using Global Entry kiosks significantly reduced wait times for CBP processing. Wait times are also subsequently reduced for the non-members remaining in the general queue.

Most EWR passengers do not experience long waits for CBP processing. During the first quarter of fiscal year 2012:

—Over 75 percent waited less than 30 minutes; and

—99.5 percent of arriving passengers waited less than 90 minutes.

NEWARK LIBERTY AIRPORT BREACHES

Senator LAUTENBERG. Thank you. Your report was excellent.

Last year there was an unusually high number of breaches at Newark Liberty. At my request, DHS is in the process of completing an investigation of these breaches. What steps can you suggest to us here now that will help identify the problems and get them fully resolved? We should have even in that relatively harmless breach of the secure area—we, I think, had something like 160,000 people tied up in one place or another, really unfair. So what can we do?

Mr. PISTOLE. Thank you, Senator.

There are two aspects to this. One is what the initial breach is and then the second is what is our response to that breach. So do we need to shut down an entire checkpoint in a terminal as a result of whatever that breach may have been? So we have reviewed our standard operating procedures for that and assessed what is the best approach. As you know, we have new leadership in there at Newark that is addressing some of the issues that have, I believe, led to some of those, whether they are isolated—I do not believe they are systemic issues, but they cause a lot of concern because of the down time associated and the loss of productivity and efficiency. And so those are the things that we are trying to address.

Senator LAUTENBERG. I am going to call on Senator Coats. But it is a question I want to get back to.

Senator Coats.

I–94 REPLACEMENT: COST-BENEFIT

Senator COATS. Thank you, Mr. Vice Chairman. I will be brief because I think I am going to have to run out and catch this vote.

But in talking about effectiveness, I am sure you are deluged with new ideas, new technology, and new equipment. And I guess my question goes to the point of how do you assess vis-a-vis the cost-benefit of a new piece of equipment that might, say, replace this I–94? There must be some electronic means you are talking about or something to that effect. Particularly at a time of constrained budgets—I get visited by a number of groups saying I have got the next best thing here to solve the problem. And if you would only buy a thousand of them and implement them across the country, why, we could expedite screening.

Could both you and Administrator Pistole talk a little bit about where we are from the standpoint of the use of new technology that might help us and are there some things that we should focus in on as we consider your budgets?

Senator LAUTENBERG. Senator Coats, I am going to go ahead and vote, and if you will——

Senator COATS. I will be happy to do it.

Senator LAUTENBERG. Thank you all. We will adjourn for just some minutes and be back.

Mr. WINKOWSKI. Maybe I can take the first crack at that, Senator.

I think with every program that we have in CBP, we look at it from the standpoint of how can we be more efficient and reduce costs. So you take, for example, the issue of the I–94 and the I–94W. So the I–94W is for visa waiver countries. It is a little form that everybody signs off. We have to stamp it and sign it and cut it and hand it out. It adds tremendous time to the process. At the same time, we have advance passenger information that we have on that particular passenger coming into the United States through a lot of good funding from this subcommittee. Thank you very much. And we also have outbound information. So we are able to match up who came in from a visa waiver country and when did they leave. They do not need to submit that particular form and send it down to a processing center for it to be keyed into a system. That is done. We have saved millions and millions of dollars on that.

The I–94 is for non-visa waiver countries. It is the bulk of the forms that we have. And we spend about $15 million per year inputting that information in the system, as well as storing it. So we are very quickly at the point where we get the same advance information coming in. We know that a passenger came in and we know that a passenger left to go back home and we can match that up and do not need that form. So that is going to save us $15 million and become much more efficient.

So Global Entry—you can take the same analysis of what it costs us to process a passenger on primary who is low-risk, who is going to be sent through the system, and send him over to a kiosk for the Global Entry system.

So as we continue to transform our organization—because I agree with you. It is not all about additional positions. I think our workload staffing model will show in some areas that there perhaps is a need for additional positions in certain areas, but overall, we cannot come up with a plan that says we are going to keep business as usual but increase our budget. Those days are behind us. So all these efficiencies that we have that we are working on are saving us millions of dollars.

Senator COATS [presiding]. Good.

Administrator.

Mr. PISTOLE. Senator, so what we look at in TSA, the bottom line, is what is our return on investment. How can we reduce risk, mitigate risk through strategic investment such as what we did after the attempted bombing on Christmas Day 2009 where the subcommittee and obviously Congress invested hundreds of millions of dollars in the advanced imaging technology machines to give us the best opportunity to detect the nonmetallic device, the bomb, that we saw on Christmas Day? So that is a strategic type of investment that helps us reduce risk.

I think a lot of the talk about the future, as we look at what some people describe as the checkpoint of the future, which different groups and associations, especially the International Air

Travel Association (IATA) have looked at, is trying to consolidate different detection capabilities into either a single piece of equipment or something that minimizes the intrusiveness, if you will, of the detection capabilities. So we are always looking for that next best idea that helps us detect devices that could be catastrophic on an aircraft, but it has to be, obviously, at a good price and able to deploy in an efficient, effective manner.

AVIATION SECURITY PASSENGER FEE INCREASE

Senator COATS. I think it is important that you keep us advised of this type of thing. Obviously, if there is some new technological breakthrough that helps us with our staffing situation and so forth, I mean, it is certainly worth looking at. But at a time of budget constraints, it is going to be difficult to provide the funding for it unless it really offsets some expenditures elsewhere to help pay for that.

I was not going to get into this subject, but I want to keep you here until the chairman gets back. So let me get to a more controversial subject.

The President's budget proposed a significant increase in the transportation fee paid by passengers. They made some adjustments. No longer is it by leg—it is by each trip. I do not believe that has been submitted yet for our consideration. One, do you have any idea as to when the administration might submit that? And two, can you give us your take on that proposal? As you know, it has not been increased in a considerable number of years. On the other hand, imposing what to a lot of passengers seems like a new tax—what is the justification for it? Just give us some download on that particular issue.

Mr. PISTOLE. Thank you, Senator.

Of course, the idea behind it is that the users of the service, the beneficiaries of that security, should have some responsibility to help pay for that. So, as opposed to somebody who never travels at all, a U.S. taxpayer, they still have a burden of paying for that security even though they never use the service. So that is the general construct behind it.

And as you noted, it has not been raised since the enactment of the fee going back to 2001–2002. And so, in the President's budget, it is simply a recognition that there is a cost to security and that the cost can be provided for by the users of that security. So what the budget looks at is an incremental increase going from that $2.50 per-segment fee up to a $5 one-way maximum fee in 2013 and then incremental increases beyond that.

So recognize there is controversy around it and it really becomes a question of, as that fee is used, can it reduce the general taxpayer's burden for the transportation security responsibilities? It also has provisions, as you know, in it that would also reduce the overall deficit, which is also something that is looked at as an obligation for the administration at this time.

Senator COATS. Relative to the timeframe in terms of which it would be introduced, any information——

Mr. PISTOLE. I do not have any specifics on that. I will have to get back with you on that.

Senator COATS. Okay.

I think what I am going to do, given the prerogative of being the chair, with no one here able to raise any objection—what I might do—I would like to let you go, but I know the chairman probably has some—why don't we just do this? Why don't we just take a temporary hold? I think she will be back at any moment. Why don't we have the subcommittee reconvene upon the arrival of the chairman. The time clock is probably ticking down. But I know they need my vote. So they will probably hold it open.

Mr. Donahue, I did not realize you were a Hoosier also. So welcome to the club, and we will all be sitting on the edge of our chair Friday night.

So we will just do a temporary hold here until the chairman returns. And I thank all of you for your testimony, and we will be back with you very shortly.

AIRPORT SCREENING: PILOTS AND FLIGHT ATTENDANTS

Senator LANDRIEU [presiding]. Thank you all so much for your patience as we juggle these schedules.

And I understand that Senators Coats and Lautenberg got their questions in. So let me begin with mine, and we are expecting them to return or some of them to return and we will continue.

Let me ask Administrator Pistole. Airline pilots and flight crews are subject to extensive background checks. So to me it makes sense to allow these vital employees expedited access through airport screening checkpoints. Now, I see them as they move past me in the line, which is most appropriate, and they move to the head of the line, but they still go through all the screenings required, including belts, shoes, buckles, et cetera.

I understand we are testing a program at seven airports where pilots can go through but not flight attendants. How was the decision made for pilots and not flight attendants? Are the security screenings for them different, and if so, how? And what could we do to include flight attendants in that pilot, and then when can we expand it to all pilots and flight attendants hopefully safely?

Mr. PISTOLE. Thank you, Madam Chair. We have, of course, for a while had some modified screening procedures in for both pilots and flight attendants, which is less onerous than for the general traveling public. But what we are doing under this Known Crewmember initiative is recognizing that starting with the pilots, they are the most trusted person on the aircraft. Almost 29,000 times per day, they get us from point A to point B safely, and it is what is really in their hands, the aircraft, that is a challenge.

So recognizing that they are the most trusted, we wanted to start someplace and so, in association with A4A and the Pilots Association, have been doing this initiative to see if this will work on a wide-scale basis. So we have been at the seven airports. There are three others that started. We just reached agreement to expand that more broadly around the country, maybe another 20 airports or so. And the whole idea from the start was let us start with pilots and then we will look at flight attendants once we make sure that the pilot system is working, recognizing that the flight attendants are, as you note, trusted and key components of the flight crew.

Senator LANDRIEU. I am assuming the flight attendants have requested this of you.

Mr. PISTOLE. They have. We have had several meetings over the last year, and I have been, I think, pretty clear about wanting to do this as a pilot initiative with the pilots to start off and then once that happened, make a decision as it relates to the flight attendants.

Senator LANDRIEU. I just want to again remind everyone that it will be, I guess, 11 years this September that this industry has been topsy-turvy. And 11 years of someone's career is a pretty long time to be going through these steps. And I think our pilots and our flight attendants have been more than patient as we try to figure this out. This is not 2 years. This is not 3 years. It is not even 5 years. I mean, it is almost one-half of a 20-year career. So I just do not think we have, in my view, a lot of time.

Again, we do not want to compromise security, but using just common sense with the screening that I am certain goes on before a pilot can get a pilot badge now post 9/11—we unfortunately learned the lesson the hard way. But I am certain that that screening—and we will hear more about it from the flight attendants that are testifying this morning—have been in place for flight attendants now, very tough screening for them, that they are as much a part of this experience. The less haggard they are, the less frustrated they are, both pilots and flight attendants, trying to do the job that we have asked them to do, that they want to do, the better.

So I wanted just to get that on the record, and I am glad that you are working on it.

Let me just stop there.

PRECHECK PROGRAM

Senator LANDRIEU. Because I was not here for the questions, I want to make sure I do not double-ask, and I see Senator Murkowski back for hers.

Let me ask on the PreCheck (Pre✓™) program. I applaud your efforts to move away from a one-size-fits-all screening approach to a more risk-based approach. Last year you launched Pre✓™. You talked about it in your testimony. The screening benefits include no longer removing shoes. You do not have to put your laptop, your jacket, your belt, liquid containers from carry-on luggage. Pre✓™ is currently at 11 airports, scheduled to expand to 35.

I understand that we have about 48 major airports. Is that true? Is that the number? What do you say?

Mr. PISTOLE. By the end of the year, we will be in 35.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thirty-five, but how many major airports are there in the United States?

Mr. PISTOLE. Oh, there are 28 category Xs, yes the largest airports.

Senator LANDRIEU. Twenty-eight big, big airports, but how many overall airports? About 400?

Mr. PISTOLE. Four hundred and fifty, approximately.

Senator LANDRIEU. So while these pilots are important, you can understand that it is just a small number, although we are focusing on the larger ones. Currently, the Pre✓™ eligibility is limited to high-mileage frequent flyers and U.S. citizens. Less than 6,000 passengers are screened daily through a Pre✓™. When you con-

sider that 1.7 million passengers travel each day, but yet only 6,000 have been prechecked, can you give us an update and what your potential expectations are? Will we ever get up to one-third of our travelers prechecked or 20 percent of our travelers prechecked, I mean, based on your assessments so far?

Mr. PISTOLE. The goal is to expand the Pre✓™ program as broadly as possible as quickly as possible while making sure that we are maintaining the best possible security. By expanding to the 35 largest airports, in many respects we will obviously capture a much greater portion of the population than we are today. The addition of additional populations such as members of the military at Reagan National Airport yesterday will help expand that. We are looking at other groups and working with industry to see how we can come up with—rapidly expanding while maintaining the best possible security.

Senator LANDRIEU. Let me ask this—probably lots of good people are frequent flyers, but there might be some bad people that are frequent flyers. Are we automatically clearing all frequent flyers?

Mr. PISTOLE. No.

Senator LANDRIEU. And are the standards for frequent flyers different by airlines? And give us some indication that there is another screen other than that you might fly frequently to sort of get access to this program.

Mr. PISTOLE. Sure. Of course, we are not publishing the exact standards that we are using or the vetting we are doing because we do not want terrorists to game the system. But obviously anybody who an airline would deem qualified to be considered—the very first check, of course, is against the terrorist screening database to make sure that there is not a terrorist trying to game the system and somebody who is just trying to rack up a lot of miles to get that possible benefit.

We also do some things that I would be glad to go into a closed setting to talk about in some more detail in terms of that vetting.

But suffice to say that it is simply a starting point for us with the more elite frequent flyers, recognizing that if they have a long history of travel, the odds are that they are not as likely to be a terrorist, but we always will keep random and unpredictable screening as part of that. So somebody may go into Pre✓™. I was in Miami yesterday and Reagan National yesterday, and saw Pre✓™ in operation. And there are those who may qualify and they may have gone through several times recently, but just for purposes of randomness, we will say, "Okay, no, you need to go through the regular screening." So the whole idea is to have multiple layers of security and then facilitate the safe, efficient travel for those whom we make that assessment on. So there is, again, more detail I would be glad to go into.

COORDINATION WITH AIRLINES AIRPORTS AND TSA OR CUSTOMS

Senator LANDRIEU. I have one more question and then I will turn it over to Senator Murkowski, and then we will probably move to our second panel.

But Mr. Smith, I was so happy to hear your level of enthusiasm and your focus on coordination because as you properly stated, the goals of safe and secure but comfortable and pleasurable travel,

which is so important to this industry and to our economy, not just for visitors but in the global economy that we have been entering now for the last 15 to 20 years—it is going to get the demands of screening and communications, even though technology sort of minimizes the need in some instances. But there is nothing like a face-to-face meeting or a face-to-face visit no matter how virtual the Internet has become. So I think this is just crucial to our world in the future.

Can you talk for just 1 more minute about some of the successes that you have specifically had to give us some ideas about the coordination between the airlines, the airports, and TSA or Customs in reducing wait times, reducing travel lines, or any feedback that you are getting from the travelers and any sort of success that you could share specifically?

Mr. SMITH. Absolutely, and thank you for that.

I will tie to what you just asked Administrator Pistole. How will we increase numbers? It is the partnership with the carriers. The carriers were instrumental. When we took Global Entry from an initial pilot and said we want to dramatically expand those numbers, my lawyers would yell at me if I told you which carrier. Let us just suffice it to say a very large carrier. Their CEO took this on as his personal mission to partner with us to help explain to the traveling public the availability of this program.

We are doing that same thing with Pre✓™, working very closely with U.S. travel to coordinate messaging to the traveling public directly. We are not in the marketing business. We are in the keeping the planes safe business. They are in the marketing business. It is this partnership. It is why we have seen the jump in the number of Global Entry applications since John expanded TSA Pre✓™, in that first week, a several hundred percent increase in applications. So we are seeing concrete examples.

In Orlando on wait times, working closely with the airport authority there, we set up an ambassadors program. So when a new flight, which we were able to add through new efficiencies into Orlando resulting in conservatively a $100 million impact to that economy flies in, they are greeted with native Portuguese speakers. So they welcome them into the Federal Inspection Services section that Tom's people have to manage in native Portuguese. It makes them more comfortable. It helps them speed through the process but once again a partnership, freeing up CBP front-line officers to do what they need to do to keep us safe while working with the airport partners to help increase efficiencies. So people are welcomed. We move through more briskly, but we keep them safe at the same time.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you.

Senator Murkowski.

AIRPORT SCREENING: INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Senator MURKOWSKI. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Gentlemen, thank you for your comments this morning.

We pay a lot of attention to what is going on within the aviation sector because people in my State have to fly, and a lot of times it is very small planes going through very small communities

through another small community to get to a medium-sized community to get to a community of size, maybe 26,000.

But what we see oftentimes is a growing frustration because TSA, in order to be effective, needs to have a one-size-fits-all approach, and that is oftentimes clearly not understood when you are in a regional fishing hub like Dillingham or Bethel and you see a dozen people from TSA who are monitoring you going through this tiny, little airport where there is not only no room for the passengers once they have gone through screening, it is a system that they look at and just say we are not quite sure why we are going through all that we are going through. And as their representative here in Congress, I have to explain to them it is all about safety and it does not make any difference whether you are in Bethel or whether you are in Baton Rouge. We are talking about safety here. But there are some very legitimate concerns that come from this type of an approach.

The first thing I would like to bring up with you, Administrator, is the procedures for those who either have special needs or issues, use of prosthetics. I know you are very familiar with the situation in Alaska. One of our members of the Alaska State House of Representatives was in Seattle, has had breast cancer and mastectomy and had a prosthesis in place and was going to be subjected to a pat-down that she felt was invasive based on a prior experience, and she refused. And the story is that she then decided that she was not going to fly back to work in Juneau, but our capital is on a island which required her to drive from Seattle through Canada, up north across the border, down to a point where she could get on a ferry to get into Juneau to go to work. It was a 3-day process but that was how she dealt with it.

She has really taken this up as a very significant issue to try to speak out and make sure that there is a level of sensitivity that goes with the screening process. And she has introduced several bills in the legislature there, one that would require signage warnings that speak to travelers of the possibility of what she considers to be very invasive pat-downs.

So I guess the question to you this morning—and I brought this up with the Secretary as well—is what have you done. What is happening within the agencies that demonstrates that in fact we are responding to these issues in a way that can help mitigate or alleviate what are clearly some very psychological effects of some pretty invasive screenings? I would hope that you would speak to not only the issue of signage in direct response to Representative Cissna's concern but any other ways that you are choosing to deal with this to help our passengers with more special needs.

Mr. PISTOLE. Thank you, Senator. You raise a number of very important points.

The comment about the one-size-fits-all, I agree that has served us in the past, but we are moving from that and have already testified about it in terms of this Pre✓™, in terms of changing the policy for children age 12 and under. We are doing an initiative this week to start on Monday with older individuals, age 75 and older, that look at alternate screening for them, allowing them to keep their shoes on, a light jacket. There are about 60,000 folks age 75 and older every day that travel. The same thing on the young side,

about 60,000 children age 12 and under. So the whole idea is, How can we differentiate on the basis of what the intelligence, the threats tell us about who may be a possible threat.

The individuals with special needs, whether it is external medical devices or prostheses or whatever the particular situation, have been a challenge for TSA over the years, clearly. In December, we launched what we call TSA Cares, which is a number that anybody with special needs can call ahead of time, ideally 48–72 hours before they would arrive at an airport, to ask questions such as, "Okay, here is my situation. How can I make sure that I am afforded good security but in the most professional, respectful way?" And we have had tens of thousands of people call that number since we stood that up in the last several months where we give advice. We obviously encourage people to look at our Web site.

The fact is that we are trying everything possible to work with individuals who have those special needs in a way that respects their privacy and the whole aspect of their dignity, and we have not done a good job in some situations.

We have a complaint line where people call in, and 85 percent of those calls are simply requests for information as opposed to actual complaints. So we monitor that.

We try to put as much information as we can out, and then we will work with individuals. So it is something that—we have also met with dozens of special interest groups that have similar situations to try to educate the traveling public and those they represent, and these groups represent tens of millions of people who travel either frequently or occasionally. But it is a daily challenge for us dealing with the 1.7–1.8 million people.

CARGO SCREENING

Senator MURKOWSKI. And I understand that. I also recognize that oftentimes you can look to that Web site because we have directed people there, having gone to the call line. But oftentimes you read that and then you go through the line, and it is what it is. You are dealing with a TSA personnel that you are and they may or they may not treat you with that level of respect and understanding that you had hoped. Of course, this then leads to the problems.

I want to bring up just one more just side issue to this, but it speaks to the sensitivity that I think is important.

In Alaska, in many parts of the State, the native women wear a traditional kuspuck. It is like a jacket that has double pockets. And I was wearing a kuspuck and I was told that you have got to remove your kuspuck because it is a little bit bulky in front. It is not a little bit bulky. You can go like this and the bulk is gone.

Let us just say I had a conversation with some of the folks there at TSA asking them how they dealt with the fact that this is native, traditional garb. Many of the women coming through wear this. And how is it handled? And the response that I got was less than satisfactory. It is something that I have intended to follow up with because I want to make sure that regardless of the part of the country that you are in, that there is a level of sensitivity, a level of discretion that is provided given the region that you are in. And

as of this point in time, I am not convinced that we are seeing that to the fullest extent.

Madam Chairman, I know that we want to move to the second panel. If I may just ask one brief question, and this relates to cargo screening.

You mentioned the passenger bag screening, but you are attempting to get to that point where 100 percent of the cargo coming through has been screened. But again, we are dealing with a situation in Alaska where much of our goods, the gallon of milk that you buy at the grocery store is coming in on the aircraft there that also provides for passengers as well. It is the number one complaint outside of the price of fuel that I am hearing in our smaller communities. I was in the community of Yakutat about 3–4 weeks ago and was told that the price of milk in the store—they said about one-half of the price that you are paying is an add-on because of TSA's security screening. I think that there was an exaggeration to that amount, but it is something that we are looking at very, very critically.

So what I would ask is that we continue to have some conversation about the cargo screening in, again, parts of the country where the situation on the ground is just a little bit different because it takes a community and a region that is already facing exorbitant costs because of transportation costs and adding to the cost of living because of these TSA security fees that are imposed on a per-weight charge. So I would like to speak with whoever it is within your Departments here that can work with us a little bit more on this issue.

Mr. PISTOLE. I will be glad to follow up with you on that, Senator. Obviously, we are trying to address—we have completed the 100-percent cargo requirement that Congress put on us for domestic, and we are working on the international aspect of that for later this year, hopefully. But it is something that we know terrorists have tried to exploit cargo, the Yuma cargo plot from October 2010. So we are mindful of that. But at the same time, we need to make sure that we are facilitating the free movement of people and goods with the best security. So that is that dynamic and that challenge. I would be glad to follow up with you.

If I could make one other point, in terms of the staffing at some of these small airports and Anchorage, I would be glad to have an offline conversation with you about some opportunities that we are looking at at the smallest airports in terms of improving the efficiencies there.

Senator MURKOWSKI. Good. I noted that you said that you wanted to work with individual airports on initiatives that they may have. So we will be happy to talk with you about that.

Madam Chairman, thank you.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you. I appreciate that.

Just like there are going to be special requirements for the major hubs where millions and millions of passengers land and take off every day, there is going to have to be some approach that is custom-designed for them. Then for the middling airports of middle size—New Orleans would be a good example. We are not a hub, but we see a lot of people coming and going every day. And then you have got your very rural airports—and Alaska, Montana, Idaho

come to mind—that need a different approach. This is 10 years, almost 11 years. We want to see some of these custom approaches and we will be pushing.

One final question to Mr. Donahue, and then we are going to get to the next panel. I would like you all to stay to listen to the next panel. And I appreciate the time you have given, but it is important.

The President's January announcement on tourism said that his goal is to expedite the visa issuance for visitors. Particularly, he mentioned Brazil and China, very important countries for us in terms of trade, technology sharing, et cetera.

How long does it currently take our Government, the State Department, to issue visas to travelers from these two countries on average? Brazil and China. Conversely, how long does it take Brazil and China to issue visas to us? If you have that information, I would like you to put it into the record this morning.

Also, what steps has the State Department taken to reduce interview wait times, processing times, and travel distance to consulates in these countries?

We go down to our local office to get a passport, and for us in New Orleans, it is just a little bit of time. Maybe for Alaska, it is a little bit different. But if you think about China and Brazil, how large those countries are, there could be lots of travel time to the consulates.

So what is the answer to the first and second question, please?

Mr. DONAHUE. Thank you, Senator.

In China today to get an appointment, the longest you wait is 6 days.

Senator LANDRIEU. Six days.

Mr. DONAHUE. Or 8 days. I am sorry. In Guangzhou it is 8 days.

Senator LANDRIEU. To get an appointment.

Mr. DONAHUE. To get an appointment.

And the visas are usually issued in most cases in about 3 days from then. You will receive the visa delivered to your home. There are cases that require additional security checks. Those can take 2–3 weeks, but that is a small number of the total.

Senator LANDRIEU. And do people have to come there in person?

Mr. DONAHUE. And that is what we have been working on with our colleagues at DHS. First-time applicants, according to the law, are required to come in and apply in person. On renewal applicants, we have extended the time from 1 year to 4 years in the Executive order that the President announced, so that if your visa—and this is particularly important in China where they only have 1-year visas. If your visa has expired within the last 4 years, we will review that case, see if there is any information that makes it possible that we have concerns, look at all the information we have from the person's prior travel from our partners at DHS, and if we see no indicators that there might be a reason of concern, the person can send that in, does not have to travel to one of the five consular offices in China.

And we are doing the same in Brazil. And also in Brazil, we have a special program that we are trying as part of this pilot where children under age 16 years and adults age 66 and over can send in their applications, and then DHS is helping us with the biomet-

ric part of that. But it is very important the first time. That is when we set the identity of that person with their biometrics.

As I mentioned, we sent teams out in the last couple months to both China and Brazil to look at new locations to get close to them. We have four visa-issuing posts in Brazil and five in China, and we are looking at other alternatives.

Senator LANDRIEU. The Foreign Operations bill gave the State Department video conferencing capability or authorization to use video conferencing and doubled the Chinese tourism validity from 1–2 years. Why has the State Department not used these new authorizations?

Mr. DONAHUE. On the video conferencing, we have done a pilot of video conferencing. We do not believe it meets the security standards. As I mentioned, we do need an interview, for instance, to set the identity of that person, so we collect the biometric and we have the interview, and we have an American that we trust say that that is the person that gave us those biometrics. That is the same biometric that is used by my colleagues as they arrive in the United States, and having that done in person is very important.

In addition, if we do feel that we need an interview with a person, it is the three-dimensional interview. It is that person being there, watching how they come up to the window, how they react to other people in the room. We do not believe that we could do a good security review of that person by video conference.

Senator LANDRIEU. What about the 2 year?

Mr. DONAHUE. The 2 year. According to the Immigration and Nationality Act, visa reciprocity must be based, to the extent possible, on what the other country grants to Americans. Some Americans going to China are granted up to 1 year. Many are granted much less. Our Ambassador Locke in China has been talking to the Chinese Government about this issue. We would like to extend it to 2 years or more with agreement from our colleagues from DHS, but we need the reciprocal agreement from the Chinese.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE QUESTIONS

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you. It has been a very excellent panel. Thank you so much, and if you all do not mind staying for the next 30 minutes to hear from the private sector, which is very important to hear from them about some of their successes as well as some of their challenges.

[The following questions were not asked at the hearing, but were submitted to the Departments for response subsequent to the hearing:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO HON. JOHN S. PISTOLE

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARY L. LANDRIEU

TSA'S PRECHECK PROGRAM

Question. Are you planning to expand the program beyond elite fliers and Global Entry members? If so, what is the Transportation Security Administration's timeline and what risk-based criteria will be used for expanding PreCheck (Pre✓™) eligibility beyond the scope of the current pilot testing?

Answer. By the end of calendar year 2012, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) plans to bring TSA Pre✓™ to a total of six airlines and over 30 of the Nation's busiest airports. In addition to certain eligible frequent flyers and U.S.

Customs and Border Protection Trusted Travelers, TSA is conducting a proof of concept at Washington-Reagan National Airport (DCA) to incorporate members of the armed services into the expedited passenger screening model. This proof of concept aims to expand upon the existing expedited screening procedures for members of the military in uniform, which is required pursuant to "Risk-Based Security Screening for Members of the Armed Forces Act" (Public Law No. 112–086), and would allow members of the military who are not in uniform or traveling on official orders (as required under the recently enacted law) to take part in TSA Pre✓™. In addition, TSA is currently partnering with the Department of Defense (DOD) to examine how DOD may provide TSA a list of TSA Pre✓™-eligible Active Duty personnel. This approach would allow TSA's Secure Flight program to automate identification of these travelers as TSA Pre✓™-eligible. Accordingly, this will enhance our ability to offer DOD members TSA Pre✓™ at all of our TSA Pre✓™ sites.

Additionally, TSA has met the requirements of the recently enacted "Risk-Based Security Screening for Members of the Armed Forces Act," Public Law No. 112–86. TSA's long-standing policies for troops include the following expedited procedures in airport checkpoints nationwide:

—United States service personnel in uniform with proper ID, whether or not traveling on official orders, are not required to remove their shoes or boots unless they alarm our technology.

—Family members can obtain gate passes to accompany departing troops or meet their loved ones when they come home.

—TSA also expedites screening for Honor Flight veterans, and partners with the Department of Defense (DOD) to expedite screening for wounded warriors.

Question. How many participants are necessary for the program to be a success?

Answer. TSA has established a goal for fiscal year 2013 to double the number of passengers who are eligible to participate in TSA Pre✓™ and other risk-based security initiatives. Based on our aggressive plan to continue to add additional large airports with heavy passenger volumes, as well as additional air carriers, we are extremely confident in our ability to successfully meet that goal. This will allow us to assess further expansion of TSA Pre✓™ to airports, air carriers, and low-risk populations. TSA will not measure success only by the number of participants but also based on factors such as passenger satisfaction.

Currently, more than 90 percent of TSA Pre✓™ passengers surveyed are highly satisfied with the expedited screening experience.

Question. Are you simply trusting that frequent fliers are not terrorists? What are you doing to prevent terrorists from "learning their way around" these new security measures?

Answer. The Transportation Security Administration employs random, unpredictable security measures at any time. Therefore, no traveler is guaranteed to receive expedited screening every time they travel. Additional information on countermeasures is Sensitive Security Information and may be provided upon request.

Question. Pre✓™ is available to any U.S. citizen who is a member of one of Customs and Border Protection's trusted traveler programs, such as Global Entry. Charles Barclay from the American Association of Airport Executives points out in his written testimony that some two-thirds of the American public is currently ineligible for participation in Global Entry because they don't hold a valid passport. What is the agency doing to ensure that all interested Americans are able to apply for and—if eligible—participate in the program?

Answer. In addition to the currently participating airlines, American Airlines and Delta Air Lines, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is expanding TSA Pre✓™ to include frequent flyers from additional airlines by the end of calendar year 2012. Interested individuals may apply to become a member of a U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Trusted Traveler program, and opt in to become eligible for TSA Pre✓™. For U.S. citizens who do not have a valid passport and who are not frequent flyers, the process to obtain a passport is available through the U.S. Department of State's Web site, http://travel.state.gov. As part of the ongoing partnership across the Department of Homeland Security, TSA is closely partnering with CBP to provide additional enrollment opportunities to apply for membership in a CBP Trusted Traveler program. Current members of CBP's Global Entry, SENTRI, and NEXUS Trusted Traveler programs are automatically eligible to participate in TSA Pre✓™.

Question. Last year Congress appropriated $10 million for TSA to implement Pre✓™. Are you properly resourced to expand this program?

Answer. Yes. The current TSA Pre✓™ approach leverages existing U.S. Customs and Border Protection Trusted Traveler programs in conjunction with Secure Flight prescreening processes and infrastructure.

Question. Will investments in risk-based related programs result in net savings to TSA programs in the future? When should we expect those savings to be realized?

Answer. The overarching goal of risk-based security is to improve security by enabling the Transportation Security Administration to better focus resources on those passengers who could pose the greatest risk—including those on terrorist watch lists—while providing expedited screening, and perhaps a better travel experience, to those considered our low-risk, trusted travelers. Other factors, such as cost efficiency and passenger satisfaction, may increase as a result of these approaches, but those consequences are incidental outputs rather than intended outcomes.

Question. Based on the "proof of concept" pilot testing, what has been the average time savings for screening Pre✓™ passengers compared to other passengers?

Answer. TSA Pre✓™ expedited passenger screening has been operational in a proof of concept manner within a small number of airports for only a limited amount of time. Preliminary results related to higher throughput and average screening time appear promising, but it is too soon to draw system-wide conclusions. In the interim, customer satisfaction data from both TSA (captured via airport kiosks and customer contact center inquiries) and the airlines demonstrate high levels of satisfaction with the expedited screening experience.

Question. Has TSA conducted surveys of Pre✓™ participants? If so, what has the feedback been? Have any areas for improvement been identified? If so, what are they and what is TSA doing to evaluate and implement these suggestions?

Answer. As of late March 2012, over 645,000 TSA Pre✓™ boarding passes were scanned at selected TSA airport checkpoints, enabling expedited screening for known travelers who opted in to participate. Customer satisfaction data from both TSA (captured via airport kiosks and customer contact center inquiries) and the airlines demonstrate high levels of satisfaction with the expedited screening experience. As a result of the feedback, TSA updated the public Web site with checkpoint specifics for each airport offering TSA Pre✓™ and worked with airlines and U.S. Customs and Border Protection to make enrollment/opt in instructions and other communication messages even more clear. The feedback also revealed the need for intensive marketing and other materials during the first few days of a new launch to inform individuals how to become eligible for TSA Pre✓™.

Question. What metrics are you putting into place to judge the success of the Pre✓™ program?

Answer. The overarching goal of risk-based security is to improve security by enabling the Transportation Security Administration to better focus resources on passengers who are either unknown risk or high risk. Key indicators of success include security effectiveness; growth in passenger participation (new opt-ins/enrollments); checkpoint throughput capacity growth; completion rates for workforce training; passenger satisfaction rates as measured by kiosks and call center data; and the ongoing capability to bring additional airlines and populations into the process in a seamless manner as measured by successful execution of the expansion plan. Specific information on security effectiveness metrics is sensitive security information and may be provided upon request.

EXPEDITED SCREENING FOR MILITARY MEMBERS

Question. What is your timeline for expanding this program nationwide? Will this expansion occur within the timeframe required by Public Law 112–86, the Risk-Based Security Screening for Members of the Armed Forces Act?

Answer. TSA has met the requirements of the recently enacted "Risk-Based Security Screening for Members of the Armed Forces Act," Public Law No. 112–86. TSA's long-standing policies for troops include the following expedited procedures in airport checkpoints nationwide:

—United States service personnel in uniform with proper ID, whether traveling on official orders or not, are not required to remove their shoes or boots unless they alarm our technology;

—Family members can obtain gate passes to accompany departing troops or meet their loved ones when they come home; and

—TSA also expedites screening for Honor Flight veterans, and partners with the Department of Defense (DOD) to expedite screening for wounded warriors.

In late March 2012, TSA initiated a proof of concept at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport to screen Active Duty members of the U.S. military through the TSA Pre✓™ expedited passenger screening lanes. Active Duty servicemembers, including National Guard and Reserves on Active Duty, are eligible through presentation of a valid DOD-issued Common Access Card (CAC) at checkpoints enabled with DOD CAC readers.

Based on the outcome from the proof of concept, and the intention of moving away from a military ID card-based model and toward a list-based boarding pass issuance model, eligible servicemembers will be issued known traveler numbers by DOD for use when traveling, consistent with other Pre✓™ populations. TSA and DOD believe this approach will best enable eligible servicemembers to receive expedited screening at all Pre✓™ airports without the installation of additional hardware and software required for the CAC based pilot. TSA and DOD will collaboratively determine next steps and associated timelines for screening Active Duty members of the military through TSA Pre✓™ lanes.

Question. How does TSA guard against someone like Major Hassan, the Fort Hood shooter, from having expedited screening?

Answer. Information on countermeasures is sensitive security information and may be provided upon request. As we have always stated, the Transportation Security Administration may employ random, unpredictable security measures at any time. Therefore, no traveler is always guaranteed to receive expedited screening every time they travel.

EXPEDITED SCREENING FOR PILOTS AND FLIGHT ATTENDANTS

Question. Airline pilots and flight crews are subject to extensive background checks, so it makes sense to allow these employees expedited access through airport screening checkpoints. In fact, the 9/11 Act required TSA to begin implementing such a system. In response to that requirement, you have been testing a program at seven airports where airline pilots can forgo physical screening if they show proper ID that is verified by a central database.

What is your plan to expand this program to additional locations and what are the resource impacts of doing so?

Answer. The Known Crewmember (KCM) pilot is a result of Government and industry partnership. As a condition of the program, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is provided, at no cost to the Government, the necessary hardware and software to operate the system. All equipment, software, and other costs were paid by industry, and no additional staffing was required for KCM at the seven pilot airports. TSA and industry are discussing expanding the program.

Question. The 9/11 Act requires an expedited screening process for pilots and cabin crew members. Are you planning to adjust the system so that flight attendants can participate in this program and what is your timeline for doing so?

Answer. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is currently in discussions with industry to expand Known Crewmember (KCM) to additional airports for uniformed pilot crew members. TSA has been studying all aspects of adding flight attendants to KCM for several months. Airlines have been notified that they must be prepared to make the necessary system updates to include flight attendant crew members if TSA decides to include them in KCM. TSA expects to make a final determination on adding flight attendants by late summer of 2012.

Question. Please provide a comparison of the background checks pilots go through compared to flight attendants. Are the checks for all crew members the same? If not, please explain the differences. Please include the additional checks pilots in the Federal Flight Deck Officer (FFDO) program go through.

Answer. The types and degree of background checks are identical for all crew members. Checks include identity validation, fingerprint based criminal history records checks, continuous TSA vetting, and name checks against TSA watch lists by airlines.

FFDO background checks include results from criminal history records check; employment history check; credit history check; and, personal interviews, fromreferences provided by the candidate.

CHECKED BAGGAGE FEES

Question. Administrator Pistole, last year Secretary Napolitano testified that TSA incurs an annual cost of $259 million to screen increased volumes of carry-on baggage caused by the airlines charging for the first checked bag. Your agency has confirmed that those costs remain the same today. The baggage fees are generating billions of dollars in annual revenues for the airlines, and yet they are not required to compensate TSA for these increased costs. To address this, last year I introduced legislation called the Fair Airline Industry Revenue (FAIR) Act to increase security fees on airlines that charge passengers for their first checked bag.

What are the impacts of the airline checked baggage fees on passenger volume in general, on security, and the travel and tourism industry overall?

Answer. In general, the imposition of checked baggage fees by air carriers on the traveling public does not appear to have negatively impacted air travel volume.

From 2009 through 2011, Department of Transportation statistics show that air carriers have collected over $8 billion in baggage fees from passengers, while passenger volume has increased by 3.7 percent.

TSA security operations have been impacted by the imposition of air carrier checked baggage fees as we are experiencing an increase of volume in carry-on items at our checkpoints. TSA is seeing a notable change in checkpoint requirements and processing times since introduction of the checked baggage fees. To sustain checkpoint passenger throughput, TSA has adjusted operations to better manage an increased volume of carry-on effects. TSA estimates it costs approximately $260 million in annual additional resources to sustain current throughput rates given the increased volume of checkpoint processing.

TSA BEHAVIOR DETECTION—ASSESSOR PROGRAM

Question. In fiscal year 2012, Congress included funding for 145 additional behavior detection officers, bringing the total to over 3,100 TSA-wide. You are currently running pilots at airports in Boston and Detroit where TSA behavior detection officers have increased interaction with passengers at the checkpoint. Some have termed this as a "chat-down."

Has this effort been an effective security layer?

Answer. The purpose of the Assessor enhanced behavior detection pilot program is to evaluate the impact of enhanced behavior detection training and assessment on security effectiveness. The goal is to develop an enhanced program that utilizes a wide range of behavior analysis tools to identify potential threats while improving screening efficiencies and the passenger experience. This new capability builds upon the strengths of the Screening of Passengers by Observation Techniques (SPOT) program, wherein an April 2011 study conducted by the American Institutes for Research (AIR), under the sponsorship of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) indicated that the SPOT program was significantly more effective than random screening: travelers carrying dangerous/prohibited items or resulting in a law enforcement arrest were nine times more likely to be identified using SPOT as compared to random referral screening. The Assessor also fits within the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) risk-based security model. Like SPOT, the Assessor enhanced behavior detection program focuses on applying behavior detection resources on individuals displaying suspicious indicators.

TSA is currently collecting data at these pilot sites to evaluate the effect of enhanced behavior detection on security effectiveness, efficiency, passenger satisfaction, cost, and industry vitality. Preliminary data reveals support for the pilot; however, additional data is required (and being collected) to provide a complete analysis of the value of this new layer.

Question. Will it be expanded to Pre✓™ lanes?

Answer. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is currently collecting data at these pilot sites to evaluate the effect of Assessor on security effectiveness, efficiency, passenger satisfaction, cost, and industry vitality. Should the results be favorable, TSA will begin expansion of this skill to its behavior detection officer workforce beginning in 2012. TSA is currently exploring implementing a new enhanced behavior detection proof of concept (PoC) for Boston Logan International Airport and Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County International Airport. This PoC combines Assessor skills with Screening of Passengers by Observation Techniques (SPOT) program operations. By melding the best practices of both the SPOT program and the Assessor proof of concept together, this new option represents the next step toward defining the optimal behavior analysis capability for TSA's risk-based security objectives.

Question. Please describe the steps TSA has taken to address the concerns raised by the Government Accountability Office.

Answer. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) completed an audit of the Screening of Passengers by Observation Techniques (SPOT) program in May 2011. Eleven recommendations resulted from this audit and are outlined below with the status of each:

—GAO recommended that an independent panel of experts review the methodology of the Department of Homeland Security Science and Technology Directorate (DHS S&T) validation study to determine whether the methodology is comprehensive enough to validate the program. DHS S&T completed an independent peer review of the study's methodology in June 2011. This panel review resulted in support of the methodology as a whole. This recommendation was closed in December 2011.

—GAO recommended that a comprehensive risk assessment and cost-benefit analysis be conducted to determine the effective deployment of SPOT with a comparison to other security screening programs. TSA has developed a risk and cost analysis framework, which has been applied to several different physical countermeasures such as advanced imaging technology and x-ray. Based on its internal validation processes, TSA is refining the framework and data in order to complete the risk and cost analysis work for behavior detection officers (BDOs). The behavior detection capability serves as a routing function to channel higher risk passengers toward additional screening. TSA is conducting ongoing analysis to understand the cost-effectiveness thresholds for alternative concepts of operation. TSA is working with DHS S&T to develop more definitive data on the probability of detection (P(d)) and probability of encounter (P(e)) of BDOs. In 2011, DHS S&T issued a report validating that BDOs provide effectiveness significantly better than random, but that study was not designed to elicit a precise probability of detection. TSA continues to gather operational data pointing to P(d) and P(e) and works with DHS S&T to further meaningfully quantify P(d) in non-operational evaluations. These recommendations remain open.

—GAO recommended that the SPOT program revise its strategic plan by incorporating risk assessment, identifying cost and resources, linking it to other related TSA strategic documents, describing how SPOT is integrated and implemented with TSA's other layers of aviation security, and providing guidance on how to effectively link the roles, responsibilities and capabilities of Federal, State, and local officials providing program support. TSA is finalizing a SPOT strategic plan, which includes strategic goals for fiscal years 2012 and 2013, detailed action plans, and resource requirements to achieve each strategic goal. Recently, the SPOT Program Management Office was moved from the Office of Security Operations to the Office of Security Capabilities (OSC). The SPOT strategic plan is being revised to align with OSC goals and objectives. TSA expects to complete the SPOT strategic plan by the end of the second quarter of fiscal year 2012. This recommendation remains open.

—GAO recommended studying the feasibility of using airport checkpoint-surveillance video recordings of individuals transiting checkpoints, and who were later charged with or pleaded guilty to terrorism-related offenses, to enhance its understanding of terrorist behaviors in the airport checkpoint environment. On June 10, 2011, TSA completed a field survey to determine closed-circuit television (CCTV) capability at individual airports, including the presence of CCTV systems, the retention time of checkpoint surveillance footage, and the quality of video recordings. The feasibility study will be completed by the end of the third quarter of fiscal year 2012 at which time TSA will request that GAO close the recommendation. This recommendation remains open.

—GAO recommended that guidance be provided in the SPOT standard operating procedure (SOP) or other TSA directive to BDOs, or other TSA personnel, on inputting data into the Transportation Information Sharing System (TISS) and set milestones and a timeframe for deploying TISS access to SPOT airports so that TSA and intelligence community entities have information from all SPOT law enforcement officer (LEO) referrals readily available to assist in "connecting the dots" and identifying potential terror plots. All airport operations with SPOT have appropriate training and access to report into TISS. This was included in the most recent SPOT SOP. This recommendation has been closed.

—GAO recommended to implement the steps called for in the TSA Office of Security Operations business plan to develop a standardized process for allowing BDOs or other designated airport officials to send information to TSA's Transportation Security Operations Center (TSOC) about passengers whose behavior indicates that they may pose a threat to security, and provide guidance on how designated TSA officials are to receive information back from the TSOC, and GAO also recommended that all of the databases available to the TSOC be utilized when running passengers who rise to the level of a LEO referral against intelligence and criminal databases. On March 5, 2012, an update was provided to GAO. TSA believes that efforts it has made in the last 2 years address the issue identified by GAO; specifically, the advent of Secure Flight and the increased LEO response rate to referrals. A letter to GAO emphasizing these points is being drafted. It will also include a discussion concerning why it is not possible to access certain law enforcement databases for this purpose. These recommendations remain open.

—GAO recommended establishing a plan that includes objectives, milestones, and timeframes to develop outcome-oriented performance measures to help refine the current methods used by BDOs for identifying individuals who may pose a risk to the aviation system. TSA is establishing a panel of experts in behavior

analysis, performance measures, and predictive analysis to review current metrics and identify additional outcome based performance metrics. The panel is expected to stand up in the third quarter of fiscal year, but this date may be influenced by budget restrictions. To mitigate this issue, the program office created its own internal working group that met for the first time during the week of February 6, 2012. This internal working group included experts from the field, and other internal supporting program offices to discuss current metrics, establish new metrics, and identify gaps and future needs. The internal working group will be working to align TSA's performance outcome-oriented goals with TSA's Behavior Detection Analysis Division Strategic Plan. In addition to the internal working group, TSA will also be aligning research and development to these outcome-based performance metrics. The plan as described will be completed by the end of the third quarter of fiscal year 2012 at which time TSA will request that GAO close the recommendation. This recommendation remains open.

—GAO recommended establishing controls to help ensure completeness, accuracy, authorization, and validity of data collected during SPOT screening. The SPOT Performance Management Information System (PMIS) was demonstrated to GAO at which time they agreed to close this recommendation. This recommendation has been closed.

—GAO recommended establishing timeframes and milestones for its plan to systematically conduct evaluations of the SPOT training program on a periodic basis. The DHS S&T sponsored a comprehensive job analysis for the BDO position that was completed in 2010. Based on these findings, the Office of Training Workforce and Engagement (OTWE) completed a training task analysis (TTA) that will be periodically evaluated and updated. This document provides analysis on the training gaps that exist based on the current training curricula and what is required of the BDO position. This recommendation is open and has been requested closed.

ADVANCED IMAGING TECHNOLOGY

Question. Following the failed attempt to blow up Northwest flight 253 on Christmas Day in 2009, the Department accelerated its request to field advanced imaging technology machines to detect both metallic and non-metallic threats. Congress has supported your requests and has funded 1,250 of these units through fiscal year 2012. Funding for the first 500 machines was included in the Recovery Act followed by 500 additional machines in fiscal year 2011. The last 250 were funded in the fiscal year 2012 DHS Appropriations Act. Approximately 640 of the 1,250 have been fielded, just over half.

Your budget indicates that a total of 1,800 AIT machines are needed. There is no money in your request to go beyond the current level of 1,250.

Are you planning to meet the 1,800 requirement in future years?

Answer. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is reviewing the current full operational capability for advanced imaging technology (AIT) units. The initial estimate of 1,800 may change based on TSA's risk-based security initiatives, potential reductions in processing times, and qualification of new and innovative AIT solutions.

TSA has acquired two different types of AIT machines. Both serve the same purpose, but one is made with a technology called millimeter wave and the other is made with a technology called backscatter. There are approximately 250 backscatter machines fielded at airports today and 390 millimeter wave machines. The millimeter wave machines have been upgraded with software called automated target recognition which automatically displays a cartoon outline of the passenger instead of a real image. This was a major advancement in terms of passenger privacy. The backscatter machines still require a human operator to view the passenger's real image.

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Question. Can you tell the subcommittee when the backscatter machines will be upgraded with the automated target recognition software?

Answer. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is working with all advanced imaging technology (AIT) system vendors to ensure the implementation of automated target recognition (ATR) software. TSA has successfully tested, upgraded, and implemented ATR on all deployed millimeter wave AIT systems. TSA's backscatter AIT vendor has had difficulty in meeting the ATR requirements; because of that delay, airport testing will not commence until spring 2012. Airport testing and system evaluations, along with other assessments and system upgrades, will take approximately 240 days to complete; therefore, TSA expects to have ATR on 100 percent of AIT units by spring 2013.

AVIATION SECURITY CAPITAL FUND

Question. Of the $250 million available from the Aviation Security Capital Fund (ASCF) for fiscal year 2012, how much does the agency intend to use for EDS equipment procurement?

Answer. The Transportation Security Administration plans to utilize approximately $146.3 million of the fiscal year 2012 ASCF for explosives detection systems equipment procurement. Related equipment installation costs of approximately $50.2 million will also be funded from the ASCF. These estimates may change based on requirements determined as a result of ongoing field evaluations and airport readiness.

Question. How much will be dedicated for airport terminal upgrades?

Answer. In fiscal year 2012, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) plans to utilize approximately $53.5 million for facility modifications at airports. As part of TSA's recapitalization efforts, $40.2 million will be awarded for facility modifications and $12.3 million will be dedicated to facility modifications associated with new in-line checked baggage inspection systems. Additionally, $1.0 million will be used to upgrade existing checked baggage inspection systems to comply with current TSA standards. These estimates may change based on requirements determined as a result of ongoing field evaluations and airport readiness.

Question. How much in Aviation Security Capital Fund (ASCF) resources do you propose to use for explosives detection systems equipment purchases in fiscal year 2013?

Answer. In fiscal year 2013, the Transportation Security Administration plans to utilize approximately $183.9 million of the ASCF to purchase explosives detection systems equipment. Installation costs of about $37.8 million and facility modifications totaling about $28.3 million will also be funded from the ASCF. These estimates may change based on the requirements confirmed as a result of on-going field evaluations and airport readiness.

Question. What impact will the use of ASCF resources for equipment rather than airport modifications have on efforts to upgrade baggage screening systems at airports in fiscal year 2012 and fiscal year 2013?

Answer. The large increases in funding for explosives detection systems in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and other recent appropriations helped the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) complete nearly all airport facility modification projects for category X and I airports. TSA continues to encourage airports to submit applications for in-line baggage screening systems; however, an in-line system or facility modification is not always an optimal solution for an airport. Optimal solutions for airports include both stand-alone systems and in-line systems which vary on an airport-by-airport basis; therefore, not all airports require an in-line system. Additionally, TSA has found that many smaller airports either do not have their share of funding to support a facility modification or have not expressed interest. As a result, there are few applications to fund facility modifications and the overall requirement is small.

TSA plans to fund two facility modifications for which it received applications using the fiscal year 2012 Aviation Security Capital Fund: Bellingham International Airport and Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport. TSA also plans to use a combination of mandatory and discretionary funds to award five other transactional agreements for facility modifications associated with in-line Checked Baggage Inspection Systems (CBIS) during fiscal year 2012. All requested facility modification projects that satisfied the criteria outlined in TSA's Program Guidelines and Design Standards for CBIS were funded in fiscal year 2012.

At this time, TSA has received a small number of airport applications for consideration for funding the construction of an in-line CBIS in fiscal year 2013. TSA will review applications received and prioritize the requirements within the framework of its risk-based prioritization process which considers requirement factors such as equipment for growth and critical operational projects needed to remain compliant with screening mandates.

Additionally, as part of TSA's efforts to recapitalize the aging equipment in its fleet, some airports may be identified where the replacement of existing baggage screening equipment with an in-line system can be justified by project costs and operational efficiencies.

Question. What are you doing to ensure that adequate funding is available for airport facility modifications necessary to accommodate new explosives detection systems (EDS) equipment?

Answer. The large increases in funding for explosives detection systems in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and other recent appropriations helped the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) complete nearly all airport facility modification projects and shift its focus to the recapitalization of its aging fleet. TSA's plans include funding for facility modifications required to replace existing equipment with new explosives detection systems and explosives trace detection units on a one-for-one basis. Additionally, as airport screening areas are identified where the replacement of existing equipment with optimal systems can be justified by project costs and operational efficiencies, funds will be budgeted to support those projects. TSA continues to encourage airports to apply for funds to assist in the construction of in-line checked baggage inspection systems. TSA will review applications and prioritize the requirements within the program framework of its risk-based prioritization process, which considers requirement factors such as equipment for growth and critical operational projects needed to remain compliant with screening mandates.

SECURITY PROCEDURES FOR AIRPORT EMPLOYEES

Question. Please describe screening and access control procedures that are in place to prevent airport employees from bringing dangerous items into sensitive areas like tarmacs or aircraft cargo holds.

What are the current screening protocols for airport employees?

Answer. Airport employees are subjected to multiple levels of security screening measures, as follows:

—Background checks are completed on all airport employees, and the same employees are continually vetted against various databases. Also, many airports have installed biometric scanning devices, which are used to screen airport employees before they are allowed to enter the secured or sterile areas.

—In addition, multiple physical security layers are in place to prevent airport employees from bringing dangerous items into sensitive areas. Many of the layers are implemented in a random and unpredictable manner. These include:

  —TSA screens airport employees holding sterile area or secure identification display area badges who access the sterile area via the security screening checkpoint in the same manner as enplaning passengers.

  —Transportation security officers (TSOs) periodically conduct Playbook activities, which consist of airport employee screening at access points leading directly into the secured (tarmac) or sterile (terminal) areas. This screening may take place in or around the airport terminal or at access points on the airport perimeter and may include a physical search of an airport employee's bags.

  —Transportation security inspectors (TSIs) conduct various inspections and tests in and around tarmacs, baggage areas, and aircraft. These tests include verifying that employees have visible and accurate ID media. TSIs routinely conduct inspections of aircraft operators, such as verifying that aircraft cargo holds have been swept for prohibited items before loading new baggage or freight. TSIs' presence acts as a deterrent and represents an additional layer of security.

Question. What are the respective roles of airport security officials and the TSA?

Answer. Airport operators are required per 49 C.F.R. 1542.3(a) to designate one or more airport security coordinators (ASC). ASCs generally serve as the airport operator's primary point of contact for security-related activity and communications with the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

Airport operators are responsible for submitting an Airport Security Program (ASP) to the responsible TSA Federal Security Director (FSD) for approval. The ASP's approval is contingent on the FSD or designated TSA official determining the document complies with all content requirements as specified in 49 C.F.R. part 1542. Procedures for access and movement control within the secured areas and air operations area (AOAs) are required elements of an ASP. At the discretion of the airport operator, the ASP may also contain more restrictive requirements for entry to the sterile, secured, or air operations areas than those baseline requirements

identified in 49 C.F.R. 1542. TSA officials regularly meet with airport officials and aircraft operators to discuss and fine tune security procedures.

Airport operators with a complete ASP are responsible for providing secure identification display area (SIDA) training classes, which are a prerequisite to an employee's receipt of SIDA access media. The training classes must include proper access procedures for entry to the airport access-controlled areas to include the sterile area, SIDA, and AOA, per 49 C.F.R. 1542.213. TSA screens airport employees holding sterile area or SIDA who access the sterile area via the security screening checkpoint in the same manner as enplaning passengers. TSA also conducts Playbook security screening of individuals accessing sensitive areas of the airport via doors and airport perimeter vehicle gates located away from passenger security screening checkpoints.

Finally, airport law enforcement officers (LEOs) at several airports have deployed sophisticated surveillance systems that alert LEO dispatchers when a sensitive area's access door is opened. In those cases where an access door is opened and a determination is made that the individual was improperly bypassing security checkpoint screening while carrying a bag or similar item, the airport police frequently issues the individual a citation and suspends the individual's sterile area/SIDA access media. The incident is also reported to the TSA for further investigation.

Question. What resources do you dedicate to this effort?

Answer. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has allocated 1,654 full time equivalent (FTE) transportation security officers (TSO) in fiscal year 2012 to the Playbook program.

From April 1, 2011–March 31, 2012, Playbook has screened 3,325,472 employees at 162 airports that conduct Playbook. The total number of hours spent screening employees was 826,015 hours for the past 12 months.

A national cadre of 710 transportation security inspectors–aviation (TSIs–aviation) monitors, tests, and inspects airport compliance of established regulations, such as access control issues, Airport Security Program implementation, and other security regulations.

Question. In 2008, an independent study on airport employee screening concluded that random screening was just as effective as 100-percent screening. 100 percent screening of airport employees was deemed cost-prohibitive. Do you conduct random screening today at the levels evaluated in the independent study?

Answer. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) does conduct screening of airport employees on a random and unpredictable basis. Such screening activities are conducted in accordance with the Playbook standard operating procedures (formerly Aviation Direct Access Screening Program) and include screening of employees and/or their property and vehicles at locations such as direct access points, screening checkpoints, and vehicle SIDA gates. The number of plays scheduled that include airport employee screening is left to local Federal Security Director (FSD) discretion based on the individual layout and operating conditions of the airport. Airports with more direct access points and vehicle gates will require a greater number of plays targeted at employee screening. While the 2008 Office of Inspector General study did not include a benchmark percentage for screening employees, FSDs are expected to make risk-based and intelligence-driven decisions on the proper amount of plays scheduled to ensure that employee screening is an effective deterrent.

SCREENING PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Question. Based on the new requirements in the FAA re-authorization bill, how will TSA compare costs of Federal screening versus private contractor screening? Will imputed costs not accounted for in TSA's budget be used as part of the comparison? If imputed costs are included, is there a possibility that TSA could end up spending more for airport security through an SPP contract than the amount it estimated as necessary for Federal screening?

Answer. Currently, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) develops a range of cost estimates for Federal screening, which shows multiple assumptions. TSA examines the impact to its budget and the long-term imputed retirement costs using Office of Personnel Management (OPM) guidance. It is possible that TSA could be compelled to request additional funds from Congress or reduce Federal resources if a Screening Partnership Program (SPP) contract were more expensive than Federal screening.

Question. How many applications or notices of application has TSA received since the FAA authorization bill was signed into law? How many SPP applications has TSA received in the past 2 years?

Answer. Since the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law No. 112–95) was signed into law on February 14, 2012, TSA has received two new Screening Partnership Program (SPP) applications from the Sacramento International Airport and the Orlando-Sanford International Airport. These applications follow the format prescribed by the recently enacted FAA law.

TSA also received two requests for reconsideration, which were submitted under section 830(d) Reconsideration of Applications Pending as of January 1, 2011, from Orlando-Sanford and Glacier Park International Airports.

In the last 2 years, TSA received applications from Missoula International Airport and Springfield-Branson Regional Airport during 2010; the Orlando-Sanford International Airport (two applications), Bert Mooney Airport, and West Yellowstone Airport during 2011; and the Sacramento International Airport (old and new applications), the Glacier Park Airport (request for reconsideration), and the Orlando-Sanford Airport (request for reconsideration and new application) during 2012.

Question. What areas does the Transportation Security Administration investigate when an application is filed under the SPP?

Answer. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) considers many areas when determining whether to accept an application. The primary areas evaluated are cost and security effectiveness, including the impact to the overall TSA security network. Specifically and at a minimum, TSA will look at indicators and measures that relate to an airport's security performance, workforce structure/dynamic, organizational interrelation, cost, and other location specific factors.

Question. What is the size of TSA procurement staff processing Screening Partnership Program (SPP) applications? Will the expected increase in SPP applications and statutorily mandated deadline require additions to TSA's procurement staff processing those applications?

Answer. Currently, there are six full-time SPP Office personnel and four full-time Office of Acquisition personnel who process SPP applications, with legal review provided by the Office of Chief Counsel. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is evaluating the TSA procurement staffing needs following the enactment of the Federal Aviation Administration Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law No. 112–95).

Question. TSA is now required by law to inform a contractor precisely what was deficient in their application. Does this requirement pose a security risk in that TSA will have to divulge SSI or information vital to TSA's mission of aviation security?

Answer. Since the Federal Aviation Administration Modernization and Reform Act of 2012 (Public Law No. 112–95) was signed into law on February 14, 2012, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is required to provide the airport operator, not a contractor, the findings that served as the basis for the denial and the results of any cost or security analysis conducted in considering the application. TSA is evaluating the requirement to provide reports on denied applications. Should TSA deny any application for security-related reasons, it will provide the airport operator with appropriate information in accordance with the FAA law, while ensuring the protection of such information.

KNOWN CREWMEMBER PROGRAM

Question. TSA's Known Crewmember initiative allows pilots to forego regular screening procedures if they show two forms of verifiable ID, but flight attendants are not eligible to participate in the program.

Would you respond to the proposal to expand enrollment in the Known Crewmember Program to members of the cabin crew?

Answer. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is currently in discussions with industry to expand Known Crewmember (KCM) to additional airports for uniformed pilot crew members. TSA has been studying all aspects of adding flight attendants to KCM for several months. Airlines have been notified that they must be prepared to make the necessary system updates to include flight attendant crew members if TSA decides to include them in KCM. TSA expects to make a final determination on adding flight attendants by late summer of 2012.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL COATS

RISK-BASED PASSENGER SCREENING (TSA PRECHECK PROGRAM)

Question. All aviation passengers are pre-screened through TSA's Secure Flight database. CBP's "trusted traveler" programs—Global Entry, SENTRI, and NEXUS—which provide eligibility for TSA PreCheck (Pre✓™) not only require a

criminal and law enforcement background check but charge a fee for enrollment. What, if any, additional background checks/fees are paid by "frequent flyers" qualifying for the TSA Pre✓™ program which allow them to be determined "less risky" travelers?

Answer. First and foremost, all travelers, including frequent flyers and travelers enrolled in U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) Global Entry program, are always first screened by Secure Flight against the U.S. Government's consolidated terrorist watch list maintained by the Federal Government. At present, certain frequent flyers that opt into TSA Pre✓™, as well as Global Entry members, may be eligible for expedited screening in a TSA Pre✓™ lane. To enroll in a CBP Trusted Traveler program, and to renew every 5 years, travelers must provide extensive biographic and biometric information to CBP and US–VISIT, submit to terrorism, criminal, immigration, agriculture, customs violation, and other checks. Applicants must also complete a CBP officer interview of travel history. There is a $100 fee for enrollment in Global Entry, which is valid for 5 years. Frequent flyer eligibility criteria and prescreening analysis factors, including comparisons to the CBP Trusted Traveler population, are sensitive security information and may be provided upon request.

Question. Will vacation/occasional air travelers and families who do not fly over 50,000 miles a year or meet a similar "frequent flyer" threshold ever have the opportunity to take advantage of expedited screening (i.e., TSA Pre✓™)? Or, will their only route into the program be to qualify and pay to enroll in one of CBP's "trusted traveler" programs?

Answer. For non-frequent flyers, U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Trusted Traveler programs, such as Global Entry, are the best method for becoming eligible for expedited screening in a TSA Pre✓™ lane.

Furthermore, although they may choose not to pursue expedited screening, non-TSA Pre✓™ passengers are benefiting from modifications to the standard screening process.

As one example, effective in August 2011, TSA deployed nationwide revised screening procedures for children 12 and under. This change dramatically reduced, but did not fully eliminate, the number of pat-downs for this population. As of mid-March, TSA is currently testing similarly revised protocols for adults appearing at least 75 years old.

Assuming the pilot demonstrates nationwide viability, TSA will adjust the screening procedures in the standard lane for this older population. Each time TSA uses intelligence information and a risk-based approach to modify standard screening lane procedures like this, our officers are able to focus on the more likely adversaries, while also improving the passenger experience through reduced divestiture and touch rates.

Question. Mr. Pistole, you have publicly claimed that TSA's move from a one-size-fits-all to a risk-based model in airline passenger screening in recent years saves your agency money. Could you please quantify those savings for us and where they are being achieved?

Answer. The overarching goal of risk-based security is to improve security by enabling the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to better focus resources on passengers who pose either an unknown risk or high risk. As one example, in August 2011, TSA deployed revised screening procedures for children 12 and under. These procedures are informed by intelligence and risk analysis. This risk-based adjustment dramatically reduced, but did not fully eliminate, the number of pat-downs for this population. Time previously spent conducting such actions is now available for officers to focus on more likely adversaries. This is a re-focusing of resources, better aligning them with risk, not an overall reduction in net resources required.

Question. What reduction in wait times is Pre✓™ having so far, both for enrollees and those travelers not eligible?

Answer. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) records all incidents when wait times of 20 minutes or more occur. A review of that data reflects no increase for the airports where Pre✓™ has been implemented. Otherwise, TSA Pre✓™ expedited passenger screening has been operational in a proof of concept manner within a small number of airports for only a limited amount of time. It is too soon to draw system-wide conclusions about throughput, screening time, and wait time. In the interim, customer satisfaction data from both TSA (captured via airport kiosks and customer contact center inquiries) and the airlines demonstrate high levels of satisfaction with the expedited screening experience.

Question. What is your long-range vision for the Pre✓™ program?

Answer. By the end of calendar year 2012, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is aiming to partner with a total of six airlines to bring TSA Pre✓™ to over 30 of the Nation's busiest airports. Additional known traveler populations,

such as members of the armed services and growing enrollments within U.S. Customs and Border Protection's Global Entry program, will be incorporated in a manner that reduces risk, positively impacting checkpoint efficiency, passenger experience, and workforce satisfaction.

TSA Pre✓™ is only one part of TSA's long-term vision to deliver the most effective security in the most efficient manner. TSA Pre✓™ combines with other approaches such as real-time threat assessment capabilities (including enhanced behavior detection and security technology), and enhanced prescreening (via Secure Flight) to provide benefits across the aviation security spectrum. In the long term, TSA's intelligence-driven, risk-based security efforts will, on a growing basis, enable TSA officers to focus security screening processes and technology on higher risk travelers.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD C. SHELBY

CANINE EXPLOSIVES DETECTION

Question. Director Pistole: As you point out in your budget request, and I quote: "Explosives detection canine teams are proven and reliable resources in the detection of explosives and are a key component in a balanced counter-sabotage program." My concern is that despite these claims your budget proposes cutting over $2,000,000 from the National Explosive Detection Canine Training Program. Canine detection teams are non-invasive, visible, and cost-effective assets that, unlike a body scanner, can be moved throughout our transportation infrastructure in minutes. I understand the need for as tight a budget as possible but I have serious concerns about this proposed cut, given the importance of canines in the explosives detection enterprise.

Considering this, what level of funding is TSA dedicating to research on the breeding, training, deployment and use of canine detection teams in the transportation system?

Answer. The Transportation Security Administration's (TSA's) National Explosives Detection Canine Training Program is comprised of operational entities and does not engage in research. Recognizing the importance of research in the canine field, TSA has partnered with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science & Technology (S&T) to determine possible behavioral, physiological, and genetic indicators of successful explosives detection dogs.

The contractual commitments with DHS S&T are set out in the following table:

CONTRACTS FUNDED BY S&T

Description	Fiscal year 2011	Fiscal year 2012	Fiscal year 2013	Fiscal year 2014
University of Texas (started in fiscal year 2010 with 4 option years)	$350,000	$350,000	$350,000	$350,000
Dog Genetics, LLC (Started in fiscal year 2010 with 4 option years)	288,447	288,587	269,460	277,865
Total	638,447	638,587	619,460	627,865

Question. At your current levels, are category X and category 1 airports fully supported by passenger screening canines? What about our smaller airports? If not, what is TSA's timetable for providing canine coverage?

Answer. Current allocations only provide coverage at 30 airports, a mix of category X and category 1 airports. There is no plan to expand beyond the 120 passenger screening canines currently authorized.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO THOMAS S. WINKOWSKI

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARY L. LANDRIEU

CBP WAIT TIMES AND STAFFING

Question. International arrivals at U.S. gateway airports are projected to rise anywhere from 5 to 26 percent this summer compared to last year. To cite just one example, Dallas-Fort Worth Airport projects an increase of 10.5 percent during peak hours.

This increase in travel is a positive for the U.S. economy, but it will quickly become a problem if there aren't enough CBP officers at the airports to process visitors efficiently.

In light of these projections and the fact that a number of these airports already appear to be understaffed, why is it that CBP is not seeking funds in fiscal year 2013 for additional CBP officers? And does your request take into account the forecasted growth in demand?

Over the past 10 years, CBP has put in place an automated passenger processing system. Given these improvements, what is the estimate of how much time it takes a CBP officer to process an average person during the primary inspection?

How much faster can a U.S. citizen be processed if they are a member of a known traveler program such as Global Entry?

The U.S. Travel Association has suggested a target processing time of 30 minutes for international visitors, but reported delays in some instances up to 3 hours.

Answer. CBP has developed a workload staffing model that serves as the primary decision-support tool for identifying staffing requirements at air, land, and sea ports. A congressional report that outlines the model is currently being drafted and cleared within DHS. Through the workload staffing model, CBP is able to identify that additional officers would help maintain and improve processing times. While the fiscal year 2013 President's budget does not request additional officers, it does continue to support programs and technology investments that give CBP officers the data and tools to process people and cargo faster. Additionally, the 2013 budget includes proposed legislation that would allow CBP to enter into agreements with corporations, non-Federal Government agencies and interested parties for the reimbursement of inspection services that are not currently offered by CBP, such as service for additional flights and new airports. Current statutory limitations on CBP's authority to receive outside funding, except in narrowly defined instances, have prevented CBP from receiving reimbursement from private sector and international, State, and local partners. This has resulted in the denial of the requested services or the provision of services without reimbursement.

The average processing times during a primary inspection are as follows:

Passenger type	Air [1]	Land [1]	Sea [1]
United States Citizens (USCs)	1.0		0.5
Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs)	2.0		1.0
Non-Resident Aliens	3.0		3.0
Canadian Nationals (pre-clearance)	1.2—1.9		
Passenger Vehicles		0.93	
Passenger Vehicles at Dedicated Commuter Lanes		0.25	
Bus Passengers		1.00	
Pedestrians		0.25	
Train Passengers		0.25	

[1] Minutes used as unit of measure.

U.S. citizens can clear the Global Entry kiosk in an average of 40 seconds, 20 seconds faster than a regular primary inspection. Global Entry travelers also experience a notable time savings by not having to wait in line to be processed by an officer. Global Entry travelers rarely encounter a line for the kiosks.

Question. Does CBP have a target processing time and, if so, what is it?

Answer. CBP strives to process arriving travelers as quickly as possible while maintaining the highest standards of security. CBP closely monitors wait times and works with field managers to implement facilitative passenger programs and innovative strategies to mitigate wait times. Current statistics indicate that 88 percent of international air travelers wait less than 45 minutes for processing. In fact, 73 percent of international air travelers wait less than 30 minutes for CBP processing.

CBP is working with airport authorities to document the entire processing time of passengers, including time entering the facility, time spent waiting for baggage and other elements of the passenger experience.

Question. How often does the agency meet that target?

Answer. CBP is working with airport authorities to document the entire processing time of passengers, including time entering the facility, time spent waiting for baggage and other elements of the passenger experience.

Current statistics indicate that 88 percent of international air travelers wait less than 45 minutes for processing. In fact, 73 percent of international air travelers wait less than 30 minutes for CBP processing.

To enhance air passenger facilitation over the near and mid terms, CBP is implementing an aggressive, multi-pronged mitigation strategy. This strategy is comprised of three key elements:

—effective use of existing resources;

—partnerships with carriers and airport authorities on facilitation measures; and

—enhanced risk segmentation through increases in trusted traveler membership.

Question. Please explain the staffing workload alignment tool (SWAT) and whether you believe it can improve performance in this area.

Answer. The staffing workload alignment tool (SWAT) is a scheduling tool that has the potential to improve staffing decisions and, therefore, assist in the speedy inspection of international arrivals. CBP developed SWAT at JFK International Airport to handle the unique staffing challenges at JFK—five independent international arrival facilities with each fluctuating daily peaks—to optimally deploy personnel resources. An enhancement of the SWAT is the airport wait time console real time flightboard, which utilizes live data feeds from multiple sources to create a view of passenger arrival data, thereby allowing port personnel to make optimal staff scheduling decisions. By taking into account factors such as aircraft arrival time, facility constraints, passenger volume and passenger admission classifications, port managers are able to make real-time adjustments to staffing in order to minimize passenger wait times. The real time flightboard is currently being used at JFK International Airport and has proven effective. It is now being tested at Los Angeles International Airport to determine its effectiveness at airports other than JFK International Airport.

TARGETING HIGH-RISK PASSENGERS

Question. In the fiscal year 2012 DHS Appropriations Act, Congress provided additional funding for operations at the National Targeting Center of nearly $5 million, as well as an additional $10 million in funding for CBP's Automated Targeting Systems. Can you tell us how those funds are being used and how these enhancements will help facilitate international travel and improve passenger processing at air ports of entry?

Answer. The additional $5.0 million in funding will support requisite staffing levels at the National Targeting Center–Passenger (NTC–P) by funding the salaries for staff that have been reassigned to the NTC–P from field locations.

CBP will use the additional $10 million in funding for the Automated Targeting System (ATS) to improve passenger and cargo targeting efforts, by augmenting existing entity resolution; developing visualization tools; applying predictive modeling and machine learning capabilities; and continuing work on its visa overstay and document validation initiatives. Notably, recognizing the public's sensitivity to advanced screening procedures, all of the aforementioned enhancements will be made with consideration given to the privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties of passengers. By investing in the improved exploitation of available law enforcement and intelligence information, CBP will be able to refine its targeting efforts on the most high-risk travelers, conveyances, and cargo shipments, thus allowing greater facilitation of legitimate trade and travel.

CBP will employ a three-phased approach to improve entity resolution: name matching, data augmentation, and the use of a variety of name matching routines, algorithms and models to continually assess the utility of existing and new routines to result in the most efficient and accurate encounter dispositions.

Data visualization is an integral component of data analysis or the process of looking at and summarizing data with the intent to extract useful information and develop conclusion or inferences and recognize patterns or anomalies. Development of visualization capabilities will allow CBP to communicate relevant information to analysts clearly and effectively through graphical means.

Data-driven modeling is an important complement to rules-based targeting since models can identify anomalies and patterns that would escape traditional methodologies, as well as highlight subtle features and combinations of features that are predictive of future behavior. CBP will develop and operationalize analytical and predictive models to detect patterns in data by taking advantage of all available data in a parallel manner. Additionally, CBP will employ machine learning models that incorporate new findings and evolve and learn in real time.

CBP continues to work with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and US–VISIT to automate identification of visa overstays in the United States. An automated system will allow users to perform real time checks of classified databases, implement rules in a timely and cost-efficient manner, and classify and prioritize overstays by risk.

Document validation will provide CBP the capability to verify the accuracy of the travel document information provided by air carriers for each traveler arriving in and departing from the United States prior to boarding.

These efforts will facilitate legitimate travel in ways that may not be readily apparent at the ports of entry. Improved entity resolution will reduce the number of secondary referrals since fewer false positives will be promoted to the hot lists because of better automated vetting. Link analysis and visualization tools will provide a graphical representation of relationships among travelers, their documents and other travel information. This type of information representation (as opposed to reading and integrating information from documents) will allow analysts to make faster and more informed decisions.

Question. How does your fiscal year 2013 budget request enhance CBP's targeting operations and capabilities? Do you think that these programs need additional resources, particularly for the critical operations and maintenance?

Answer. CBP is requesting additional funding of $69.7 million to address resource requirements for Automated Targeting System (ATS) maintenance and enhancements, in addition to supporting and augmenting targeting staff within the Office of Intelligence and Investigative Liaison (OIIL). The OIIL targeting staff identifies, develops, implements, and refines various methods of targeting and responding to security-related operational and real-time events involving people, goods, and conveyances entering and exiting the United States.

The additional funding of $31 million for ATS operations and maintenance and the enhancement of $38.7 million for targeting system and staff will sufficiently fund CBP's targeting requirements in fiscal year 2013, and will provide CBP with the ability to update targeting rules in real time—allowing CBP to attain a true 24/7 targeting capability to better support CBP front-line personnel.

MODEL PORTS OF ENTRY

Question. Given its success at the 20 airports in which it operates, the Model Ports of Entry program seems to be something that should be expanded to all international airports.

What impediments are there to expanding the Model Ports program? If it is an issue of funding, has consideration been given to increasing the ESTA fee or to modifying how the $14 fee is divided?

Answer. Congress approved a one-time appropriation of $40 million in fiscal year 2008 for CBP to establish the Model Ports program. The $40 million was used to deploy required equipment, monitors, signage, CBP officers and CBP officer overtime to the largest 20 international airports by volume of visitors. No additional funds for expansion are available at this time.

The current ESTA fee is comprised of two separate and distinct amounts ($10 and $4), both of which are authorized under The Travel Promotion Act of 2009. The act established the Corporation for Travel Promotion (now Brand USA) to communicate U.S. entry policies and otherwise promote leisure, business and scholarly travel to the United States. Brand USA is funded from the collection of a $10 fee assessed on travelers from visa waiver countries in the completion of a form under the DHS requirement for the Electronic System of Travel Authorization (ESTA). The $10 fee has a sunset date which prohibits its collection for fiscal years beginning after September 30, 2015. Under current law, this fee cannot be used for the Model Ports program. Additionally, the $10 fee has a current sunset date which prohibits its collection for fiscal years beginning after September 30, 2015. A fee to recover the costs of operating ESTA was authorized by the act and set by regulation in order to recover the "full costs of providing and administering" ESTA. These fees may only be used to pay the costs to administer ESTA.

Question. I understand that every Model Port has a Passenger Service Manager who responds to traveler complaints or concerns, oversees issues related to travelers requiring special processing, observes the overall traveler processing procedure, and generally serves as a liaison between the traveler, the airport, and CBP. This seems like something which should be in place at every international airport.

How much does it cost annually at the 20 airports and do the airports share in the cost?

Answer. The main cost is for the Passenger Service Manager (PSM) who is a supervisory CBP officer who is allocated from the port's managerial staff. Since the PSM program leverages existing personnel, the incremental costs are limited to training and reporting. The annual incremental cost incurred by CBP for the 40 PSMs nationwide is $3,000,000. The airports do not share in the cost of the CBP PSM program.

Question. Are there plans to expand these positions to other airports? If not, why not?

Answer. CBP has already expanded the PSM program to two land border ports of entry—Blaine, Washington, and Brownsville, Texas. We will assess opportunities to further expand the program on a case-by-case basis.

Question. How much does installing and maintaining improved signage, including welcome/informational videos, cost per airport?

Answer. The cost of improved signage varies. CBP, through its printing and graphics office, prints Model Ports signage, which includes way finder signs and queue identification signs (U.S. citizen, crew, Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, etc). The cost is approximately $1,615 per airport.

The cost of welcome/informational videos varies as well. The cost of video production can be between $30,000 and $75,000 depending on the type of service required (new video production, video editing and updating, etc).

CBP CUSTOMER SERVICE

Question. The subcommittee understands the CBP officers' primary duty is security and ensuring that the individual before them is eligible for entry into the country. However, that officer is also the first impression the traveler has of America and Americans.

I understand that CBP has a process in place to collect feedback from travelers on their entry experience through the use of comment cards at each airport.

How does CBP currently use the travelers' comments to improve customer service?

Answer. CBP conducted a Traveler Satisfaction Survey at the 20 Model Ports between October 12 and November 18, 2011.

The Traveler Satisfaction Survey was conducted to obtain feedback from the traveling public on CBP's Model Ports program and traveler experience. The survey was designed to evaluate CBP's performance in achieving the goals of the Model Ports program:

—Ensure that passengers entering the United States are welcomed by CBP officers who treat them with respect and understanding;
—Provide the right information to help travelers, at the right time and in a hospitable manner;
—Create a calm and pleasant CBP area; and
—Streamline the CBP process.

The survey findings indicate that:

—Nearly 90 percent of travelers responded that the entry process made them feel welcomed;
—More than 90 percent of travelers responded that CBP officers were welcoming, professional, helpful, efficient, and communicative;
—More than 80 percent of travelers responded that the inspection area was welcoming; and
—Nearly 90 percent of travelers surveyed felt that the entry process time was either short or reasonable with three-quarters of travelers getting through in 15 minutes or less at the model airports.

CBP is using this information to make further improvements to the passenger process and will conduct a follow-up traveler satisfaction survey as part of the continuing effort in evaluating valuable traveler feedback and further improving the traveler experience.

Question. I understand the travel industry recommended that CBP officers begin by greeting all arriving visitors with a simple "Welcome to the United States." Is that something you could adopt? Are CBP officers trained to begin the inspection process with any particular greeting?

Answer. CBP conducts professionalism musters at the local ports on a recurring basis. Creating a welcoming environment and experience is a theme that is woven into all CBP professionalism musters. CBP officers are trained to greet the traveling public with the appropriate greeting for the time of day and conclude the traveler transaction with "Welcome to the United States" or "Welcome home" as appropriate.

VISA WAIVER PROGRAM

Question. The President recently issued an Executive order which calls for the Secretaries of State and Homeland Security to "increase efforts to expand the Visa Waiver Program and travel by nationals of Visa Waiver Program participants." Currently 36 countries participate in the program, all of whom are required to share counterterrorism and law enforcement information with the United States and dem-

onstrate low visa refusal and overstay rates, in exchange for visa-free travel by their citizens to America.

Can you discuss what efforts you expect to undertake to implement this mandate and how can Congress help with your efforts?

Answer. DHS is pursuing four courses of action to support expanding the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) and travel by nationals of VWP countries:

—Given the security and economic benefits of the VWP to the United States and the program's important role in strengthening international partnerships, DHS has long supported a carefully managed expansion of the VWP to select countries that meet the statutory requirements and are willing and able to enter into a close security relationship with the United States. DHS, in concert with its interagency partners, stands ready to work with Congress to support legislative efforts that would allow DHS, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to designate additional countries that meet the statutory and policy requirements for participation in the VWP;

—DHS is reviewing Taiwan for designation in the VWP and has begun its statutorily required assessment of Taiwan. On the basis of this assessment, the Secretary of Homeland Security will make a determination on Taiwan's VWP candidacy;

—Under current VWP requirements as set out in INA section 217, relatively few additional countries qualify at present designation under the program. DHS will work with foreign governments to fulfill the legal requirements for VWP designation in advance of full eligibility; and

—DHS will support efforts led by the Departments of Commerce and Interior to craft a National Travel & Tourism Strategy to promote domestic and international travel opportunities throughout the United States.

GLOBAL ENTRY

Question. I understand that CBP's Global Entry program has over 1 million individuals enrolled in the program, and President Obama recently announced the program will expand to four additional airports this year.

Can you tell us how this automated program will help reduce wait times for travelers?

Answer. There are over a million trusted travelers with Global Entry benefits (including NEXUS and SENTRI members who are eligible for Global Entry benefits), with over 300,000 individuals directly enrolled in Global Entry. Program members do not have to wait in the general queues to be processed by a CBP primary officer, but instead proceed directly to self-service, automated kiosks. Use of kiosks reduces a trusted travelers wait time by over 70 percent (an estimated 7 minutes on average). In addition, having fewer people in the queues to be processed by CBP primary officers decreases wait times for the general traveling public.

Question. What are the plans to expand Global Entry to other airports this fiscal year?

Answer. Global Entry is currently available at 24 U.S. airports as well as six preclearance sites in Canada. CBP intends to expand the program to additional sites this year based on volume and frequent traveler data.

Question. Are funds requested in the fiscal year 2013 budget to expand Global Entry to other airports? If so, how much? What is the estimated per airport cost to expand Global Entry?

Answer. The fiscal year 2013 budget does not request additional funds to expand Global Entry to other airports; however, base appropriated dollars will be applied to planned future expansions. Global Entry kiosks cost approximately $24,000 each. On average, five kiosks are needed to expand the program to a new site. In addition, funding is needed for cabling, installation, and workstations and equipment for enrollment centers. Roughly, it would cost between $200,000–$250,000 to get a new airport established with Global Entry. This figure does not include the cost of training the officers. The ongoing operations and maintenance of Global Entry is funded through fees that were set to cover the costs of the program.

Question. Currently, individuals wishing to enroll in Global Entry must travel to a participating airport. For instance, the nearest participating airport to residents of New Orleans is Houston—a 6-hour drive. What consideration is being given to expanding enrollment centers in locations other than participating airports? What are the costs and requirements—in terms of personnel, technology, etc—associated with establishing an enrollment location?

Answer. CBP currently is analyzing the possibility of alternative enrollment centers.

As part of this analysis, CBP is evaluating the costs and requirements associated with this option and others.

Question. As interest and demand for Global Entry increase, is consideration being given to establishing enrollment locations at non-Global Entry airports—perhaps as pilot programs in which enrollment opportunities would be made available at specific times (in order to limit the time a CBP officer would be taken away from their other duties at a given location)? Please explain the costs and benefits of such a pilot.

Answer. CBP is considering establishing enrollment locations at non-Global Entry airports. This requires the acquisition of additional equipment which is necessary to conduct the enrollments. CBP estimates that equipment costs and set up of offsite enrollment locations would average between $250,000–$300,000 per location. Having enrollment centers in non-Global Entry airports would benefit the public, as they would have more enrollment location options.

Question. How does CBP's Global Entry program help TSA with its registered traveler program known as Pre✓™? Can you leverage CBP's existing technology infrastructure to make TSA's program a success?

Answer. U.S. citizens participating in CBP's trusted traveler programs (Global Entry, NEXUS and SENTRI) are automatically qualified to participate in TSA Pre✓™.

Membership in one of CBP's programs is the only way someone can participate in the TSA program currently without being invited by an airline or qualified through a TSA pilot. The Global Online Enrollment System (GOES) is the system utilized to apply for trusted traveler programs. CBP and TSA are reviewing technology infrastructure to identify options for direct participation in TSA Pre✓™ through enrollment in GOES, while leveraging the established trusted traveler vetting process to ensure the integrity of the program. Collaboration between CBP and TSA serves as a force multiplier, utilizing established technology and procedures within the CBP process as the backbone to support and increase participation in the programs.

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR PATRICK J. LEAHY

CROSS-BORDER PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE

Question. Mr. Winkowski, Vermont used to have cross-border Amtrak service along the old Montrealer line between Washington, DC, and Montreal, Quebec. Rail access to Montreal went away in 1995, though, when St. Albans, Vermont, became the terminus for Amtrak's new Vermonter train.

The State of Vermont is very interested in reestablishing Amtrak service to Montreal—and our Governor, Peter Shumlin, has made it one of his administration's top priorities.

One of the major obstacles to cross-border travel today is CBP passenger screening. While I am pleased to see cross-border train travel included in the recently announced bilateral Beyond the Border initiative with Canada, over the past few years DHS has prepared a number of reports on this topic. Unfortunately, instead of contemplating how it could happen, these reports have only recycled the same tired and worn line that "it can't be done."

With other trains already operating across the Northern border in New York State and Washington State, I know it can be done. Vermont and Quebec are working closely together to orchestrate the creation of a preclearance facility in Montreal that would benefit both the existing Adirondack service in New York and an expanded Vermonter service to Montreal.

We need help and support from CBP to make it happen.

Will you continue working with me, the State of Vermont, Amtrak, the State Department, the Quebec Government, and the Canadian National Government to construct a preclearance facility in Montreal for passenger trains?

Answer. I am pleased to report that the Beyond the Border initiative is providing the pathway for CBP to overcome the primary obstacle inhibiting full preclearance processing of passengers trains in Canada, by providing a forum for discussion of an expanded preclearance agreement to allow for rail. DHS is actively discussing the requirements of such an agreement with its counterpart, Public Safety Canada. Per the Beyond the Border Action Plan, we anticipate having a negotiated agreement by the end of this calendar year. CBP has also already provided preliminary concurrence to Amtrak on a dual-use CBP/Canada Border Services Agency facility concept design at the Montreal Rail Station as a step forward to support potential future discussions on preclearance expansion for rail, and Amtrak has indicated a

business decision to eliminate the intermediate stops on any scheduled routes that would be precleared into the United States.

While CBP is committed to continuing its review of the feasibility of expanding passenger rail preclearance in Canada, certain conditions will need to be in place before expansion can take place, including a signed bilateral agreement between the two nations, and the existence of sufficient infrastructure, funding, resources, and staffing.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL COATS

CARGO SCREENING

Question. With respect to TSA compliance with the 9/11 Act requirement to screen all air cargo bound for the United States, we have monitored what CBP has done using its automated targeting system (ATS) to identify high-risk cargo being shipped on consignment aircraft and have been impressed with the results of that program. It was our understanding that TSA was working with CBP on using this technology to enhance passenger safety on international flights until such time as other contemplated screening technologies fully compliant with 9/11 Act requirements have been developed. Can you tell me the status of these efforts and if there are practical alternatives to using the ATS to target air cargo before departure? Finally, what resources are required to achieve the goal of screening air cargo on international passenger flights?

Answer. TSA and CBP have been working together since 2009 to explore the use of CBP's automated targeting system (ATS) to target high-risk cargo for screening. Currently, ATS is being leveraged through the joint TSA/CBP Air Cargo Advance Screening (ACAS) pilot to explore the feasibility of collecting pre-departure information on international inbound air cargo and assessing its risk. Participants engaged in the pilot include express, all-cargo, passenger, and heavy all-cargo aircraft operators. The ACAS pilot procedures will align with TSA's risk-based strategy to achieve 100 percent screening of international inbound air cargo transported on passenger aircraft.

In February 2012, TSA released proposed amendments to TSA carrier standard security programs for industry comment. In addition to incorporating the "Trusted Shipper" concept and requiring 100 percent screening of international inbound air cargo transported on passenger aircraft by December 2012, the proposed amendments provide carriers incentives to submit data through ACAS as soon as possible..

The ACAS pilot provides TSA and CBP the ability to assess the resources that will be required for full program implementation. Costs will include both the modifications to the ATS, as well as personnel resources to man CBP's National Targeting Center—Cargo. Implementation of 100 percent screening of international inbound cargo transported on passenger aircraft also requires additional resources for overseas inspection, as well as implementation of TSA's National Cargo Security Program (NCSP) recognition process. The NCSP process establishes a mechanism for bilateral discussions with countries that employ similar or commensurate security measures within the air cargo and mail supply chains in order to recognize those requirements that meet or exceed TSA security requirements.

GLOBAL ENTRY PROGRAM

Question. What is the long-range vision for Global Entry? Will CBP see the most significant impact when 15 percent of the international traveling public is enrolled, when 20 percent is enrolled, or some higher percent is enrolled?

Answer. Over the long term, CBP will expand Global Entry to additional airports and to additional nationalities. As more people enroll in the program and usage increases, CBP will be able to redeploy a higher percentage of resources to process those travelers not enrolled in the program. CBP is seeing, on average, 3–5 percent of the eligible traffic (international crossings) using Global Entry kiosks at the locations where the program is operational. We are currently initiating modeling efforts to assess the impact on service levels. As each airport has different physical infrastructure and different air passenger traffic composition, the modeling will necessarily be port specific.

Question. Would CBP like to see all primary processing eventually handled in an automated fashion with minimal officers involved—and instead have officers working on targeting and staffing secondary inspection?

Answer. CBP is exploring ways to better automate the existing primary process and to fully maximize the law enforcement capabilities of the CBP officer cadre. Toward that end, CBP is looking at potential technologies and changes to its business

processes to allow primary officers to focus on conducting effective interviews and enforcement inspections. CBP will strive to accomplish the appropriate balance between automation, targeting, and officer interaction with each traveler.

Question. Today, what is the average processing time for a traveler being inspected by an officer? What is the average processing time for a traveler using a Global Entry kiosk?

Answer. The average processing time by an officer during primary inspection at airports is 1 minute for U.S. citizens, 2 minutes for lawful permanent residents, 3 minutes for nonresident aliens and 1.2 to 1.9 minutes for Canadian nationals at preclearance locations. On average, Global Entry members (U.S. citizens) can process through the kiosks in 40 seconds.

TARGETING IN THE PASSENGER ENVIRONMENT

Question. Congress provided additional funds to CBP in fiscal year 2012 for the automated targeting systems and overall for targeting activities. How are those funds being spent? What improvements are being made to the targeting systems?

Answer. Congress provided additional funding in fiscal year 2012 of $5.0 million for the National Targeting Center–Passenger and $10 million for the automated targeting system (ATS).

The additional $5.0 million in funding will support requisite staffing levels at the National Targeting Center–Passenger (NTC–P) by funding the salaries for staff that have been reassigned to the NTC–P from field locations.

CBP will use the additional $10 million in funding for ATS to improve passenger and cargo targeting efforts, by augmenting existing entity resolution; developing visualization tools; applying predictive modeling and machine learning capabilities; and continuing work on its visa overstay and document validation initiatives. Notably, recognizing the public's sensitivity response to advanced screening procedures, all of the aforementioned enhancements will be made with consideration to the privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties of passengers. Additionally, through investments to improve access to available law enforcement and intelligence information, CBP will be able to refine its targeting efforts on the most high-risk travelers, conveyances, and cargo shipments, thus allowing greater facilitation of legitimate trade and travel.

CBP will employ a three-phased approach to improve entity resolution: name matching, data augmentation, and the use of a variety of name-matching routines, algorithms, and models to continually assess the utility of existing and new routines to result in the most efficient and accurate encounter dispositions.

Data visualization is an integral component of data analysis or the process of looking at and summarizing data with the intent to extract useful information and develop a conclusion or inferences and recognize patterns or anomalies. Development of visualization capabilities will allow CBP to communicate relevant information to analysts clearly and effectively through graphical means.

Data-driven modeling is an important complement to rules-based targeting since models can identify anomalies and patterns that would escape traditional methodologies, as well as highlight subtle features and combinations of features that are predictive of future behavior. CBP will develop and operationalize analytical and predictive models to detect patterns in data by taking advantage of all available data in a parallel manner. Additionally, CBP will employ machine learning models that incorporate new findings and evolve and learn in real time.

CBP continues working with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and US–VISIT to automate identification of visa overstays in the United States. An automated system will allow users to perform real time checks of classified databases, implement rules in a timely and cost-efficient manner, and classify and prioritize overstays by risk.

Document validation will provide CBP the capability to verify the accuracy of the travel document information provided by air carriers for each traveler arriving in and departing from the United States prior to boarding.

I–94 FORM AUTOMATION

Question. What is the current status of automating the I–94 nonimmigrant admissions form that non-visa waiver country travelers fill out on the airplane?

Answer. Currently, we are considering and actively discussing the automation of the I–94 nonimmigrant admissions form that non-visa waiver country travelers complete on the airplane.

Question. What kind of processing efficiencies do you foresee once the I–94 form is fully automated?

Answer. CBP expects it may see a 20- to 30-second reduction in processing time for each passenger requiring an I–94 if the I–94 form is fully automated. The reduced processing times may result in approximately $19.1 million a year in officer efficiency savings. Potentially, there could be a savings of up to $15 million a year in contract costs if the need for data entry and storage of the paper form I–94 are eliminated.

Question. Are there any plans to automate the customs declaration form as well?

Answer. CBP is currently exploring the possibility of automating the customs declaration form.

ELECTRONIC SYSTEM FOR TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION

Question. The Travel Promotion Act of 2009 created a $10 fee to be paid by non-U.S. travelers staying in the United States less than 90 days. The proceeds of this fee are assisting in paying for an advertising campaign to promote international travel to the United States. However, CBP levied an additional $4 fee on top of the $10 fee for processing. How does CBP justify such a huge processing charge equal to 40 percent of this fee in this instance? CBP already has in place a significant apparatus to collect from the airlines a myriad of other fees imposed on international passengers arriving in the United States. Why did the addition of this $10 fee necessitate such high processing costs?

Answer. While both fees are authorized under The Travel Promotion Act of 2009, the statute treats the $10 and $4 fees separately. The act established the Corporation for Travel Promotion (now Brand USA) to communicate U.S. entry policies and otherwise promote leisure, business, and scholarly travel to the United States. Brand USA is funded from the collection of a $10 fee assessed on travelers from visa waiver countries. The $10 fee has a sunset date which prohibits its collection for fiscal years beginning after September 30, 2015. The act also required the Secretary of Homeland Security to establish a fee in "an amount that will at least ensure recovery of the full costs of providing and administering" ESTA. CBP determined that fee to be $4 by completing a fee analysis study of the costs involved in administering the ESTA program. ESTA is a fee-funded program and CBP does not receive appropriated dollars for its operation.

Question. What have been the results of the ad campaign paid for by this fee to promote international travel to the United States?

Answer. Brand USA launched its advertising and marketing campaign at the International Pow-Wow Convention on April 23, in Los Angeles, California. As Brand USA is a public-private partnership, CBP has no jurisdiction over the advertising campaign.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO DOUGLAS A. SMITH

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARY L. LANDRIEU

Question. Much of the focus of this hearing has been on how the Federal Government can make air travel more efficient and convenient without sacrificing security. However, cooperation with private sector stakeholders is critical for this to happen. What responsibilities do private sector stakeholders have to grow these programs and make them successful?

Answer. Private sector stakeholders are crucial participants in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) effort to better facilitate secure travel and tourism, and there are a number of formal and informal channels through which they can lend their expertise and engage on all travel and tourism issues.

At the national level, industry representatives are welcome to apply for membership on the Secretary of Commerce's U.S. Travel and Tourism Advisory Board (TTAB) and the President appoints members from industry to the President's Export Council (PEC). These boards represent their industry by advising at the Cabinet and Presidential levels, respectively, on emerging travel and tourism issues. Their participation assists the Federal Government in fostering a thriving travel and tourism industry.

In addition, industry representatives can play a role by working with DHS at the regional and local levels. Local level partnerships are important because the challenges that U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) face at each port are unique. Facility layout and size differ greatly from airport to airport; the airlines, cities, and travelers they serve vary; and airports are managed differently. Industry representatives should feel empowered to connect with CBP and TSA at their airport to better understand these issues and see how they can collaborate. For example, businesses are currently pro-

viding expertise in design, queue management, customer service, and other areas at airports in Orlando, Florida, and Las Vegas, Nevada. The DHS Private Sector Office is able to help businesses establish a relationship with their local airport.

Industry representatives can also play a role in many other important ways.

The air travel experience is broader than just customs or screening. Ground transportation to the airport, airport parking, rental cars, airline reservations, hotel reservations, and many other facets impact the traveler's experience. Businesses can recognize how their operations fit into the entire journey of each traveler and engage with the Government on these issues. For example, CBP and TSA do not own or even control the appearance of the port facilities, the inflow of arriving planes and passengers, or the delivery time of checked airline baggage. Dialogue and collaboration among all parties, especially airport authorities and airlines, is crucial to successful partnerships. We recognize that the entire travel experience has many layers and interconnecting parts. DHS is committed to using that understanding to facilitate secure travel and tourism.

Additionally, industry has the customer base and outreach capabilities to effectively market initiatives and programs such as Global Entry and TSA Pre✓™. Companies can help by enrolling their frequent flyer employees in these programs and informing their customers. CBP saw the largest increases in applications following promotions by credit cards, airlines, hotels, and other companies to frequently traveling customers. The DHS Private Sector Office, CBP, and TSA are ready to assist companies or organizations if they wish to promote these programs to their employees and customers.

DHS is committed to continuing dialogue and collaboration with all stakeholders to improve the travel experience without sacrificing security. The Department is grateful for the willingness of industry to learn more about the challenges and opportunities we face as well as their efforts to help strengthen and improve our initiatives and programs.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL COATS

COLLABORATION WITH AIRPORT AUTHORITIES

Question. Can you explain what funds were invested in the collaborative effort between the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Greater Orlando Airport Authority by DHS and how much by the Orlando Airport? What specific improvements were made that allowed an additional flight to be accommodated by Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the airport?

Answer. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) did not contribute any funds to the collaborative effort. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Assistant Port Director at Orlando International Airport (MCO) worked with the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority, which operates MCO, to establish a collaborative effort of regular meetings and workgroups with local travel and tourism industry stakeholders. The Greater Orlando Aviation Authority invested over $500,000 in port facilities in the beginning of 2011. In addition, the local public and private sector contributed $100,000 toward facility enhancements and $11,250 in in-kind services to the port including suggested way-finding signage and decor. The CBP Assistant Port Director and the Passenger Service Manager joined the community workgroup to provide input on the developments.

The working group was able to accommodate the additional flight from Brazil to Orlando through cooperation among the community, local congressional delegation, and DHS to quickly address staffing challenges and adjust CBP operations. Local industry stakeholders believe the flight will have a significant economic impact on the region.

Question. Are there other collaborations currently under consideration with other airport authorities?

Answer. Yes. In the coming months, the Private Sector Office (PSO), Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) are planning to organize the next meetings in upcoming airports launching TSA PreCheck (Pre✓™).

DHS continues to work with airline associations and airports to deploy TSA Pre✓™ as they become ready to implement. By the end of calendar year 2012 we plan to add 30 airports, for a total of 35 TSA Pre✓™ airports throughout the country. Orlando International Airport, the first to be highlighted by PSO, and industry partners are also collaborating to share their success with the wider travel and tourism industry. At the U.S. Travel Association Board Meeting on March 23, 2012, the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority and Universal Studios gave a presentation to

approximately 100 industry leaders on their efforts to improve the atmosphere at the port and how other airports and businesses can start their own local initiative.

CBP launched the Model Ports initiative in 2006 to present a warmer welcome to travelers and provide a more intuitive process by improving signage, communications, and using technology to facilitate entry. The PSO effort at the Model Ports, which now comprise 20 airports, connects and informs local air port of entry stakeholders—including DHS, the airport authority, other private-sector representatives, and community partners—of the role they can play in creating a more welcoming atmosphere. These efforts often leverage and highlight the strong collaboration already built by local entities. DHS looks forward to continuing to foster this kind of local-level collaboration with industry and other stakeholders of the ports of entry.

NATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM STRATEGY

Question. Since the President announced the creation of the Task Force on Travel and Competitiveness and the President's Travel and Tourism Advisory Board, what is the status of developing the National Travel and Tourism Strategy?

Answer. The Department of Commerce and the Department of the Interior continue to lead DHS and other interagency partners on the Task Force on Travel and Competitiveness in writing the National Travel and Tourism Strategy. The Task Force published a Federal Register Notice for public comment and received substantial and thoughtful input from the travel and tourism industry and other stakeholders. As the lead agencies, the Departments of Commerce and Interior are best positioned to answer specific questions regarding the current status of the strategy.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO DAVID T. DONAHUE

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARY L. LANDRIEU

VISA ISSUANCE

Question. In the President's January announcement on tourism, he said one of his goals is to expedite the visa issuance process for visitors from Brazil and China. This is important, but we want to ensure our citizens are receiving similar courtesy if they travel overseas.

How long does it currently take our Government to issue visas to travelers from these two countries, on average? Conversely, how long does it take Brazil and China to issue visas to U.S. travelers?

Answer. On April 3, 2012, all posts in China had interview appointment wait times of less than 1 week. In Brazil, interview wait times varied from 7 days in Rio de Janeiro and Brasilia, to 15 days and 35 days in Recife and Sao Paulo, respectively. These wait times represent average wait times at these posts for the last 2 months. Following the interview, on average, visa-processing posts in China and Brazil issue visas to qualified applicants in less than 3 days. Those renewing visas who meet the eligibility criteria for an interview waiver can expect to receive their visas in approximately 5 business days. Approximately 2 to 4 percent of B1/B2 applicants in Brazil, and 6 percent of applicants in China who overcome INA section 214(b) must still undergo security-related administrative processing, which may extend the period from adjudication to issuance (if ultimately found to be fully qualified) to 2 weeks or more.

China.—Chinese consular officials state that they issue visas to U.S. citizen travelers in 1 or 2 business days, though State frequently receives anecdotal reports from non-official U.S. citizen travelers of longer wait times. U.S. citizens who submit applications via mail usually receive their passports with visas in 2 weeks; however, some U.S. citizen applicants have complained of months-long delays.

Brazil.—The Department has received complaints from the U.S. citizen business community regarding Brazil's visa requirements for business travelers. Brazil applies a distinction between a short-term business visit and a short-term working visit. Under this distinction, a U.S. company sending staff to Brazil to install equipment or software, resolve specific problems, train local staff or work on a short-term specific project is required to obtain a temporary work visa rather than a temporary business visa. A temporary work visa requires approval from the Labor Ministry, a process which the U.S. citizen business community notes can take up to 6 months. The United States issues qualified short-term overseas business travelers a B1 visa, which does not require a labor certification.

Question. These are high-growth economies where America is competing with other developed countries to attract tourism dollars. U.S. consular services in these

key markets have lagged behind those of England, Germany, France, and Japan in accommodating that demand.

What steps has the State Department taken to reduce interview wait times, processing times, and travel distances to consulates in these countries?

Answer. Demand for U.S. visas in countries such as Brazil and China are at all-time highs and the State Department is taking a number of new and innovative steps to meet this demand. In the first 6 months of fiscal year 2012 alone, consular officers in China processed 44 percent more nonimmigrant visa applications, and consular officers in Brazil handled 58 percent more as compared to the same time period in fiscal year 2011. We issue nonimmigrant visas to almost 90 percent of Chinese applicants, and to over 96 percent of Brazilian applicants.

In order to build our capacity to meet the increasing demand, we are working to expand the physical infrastructure of our consular sections in Brazil and China as well as building a deeper staffing pool to adjudicate these visas. Our extensive planning on both fronts will give us the capacity to exceed projected growth. The additional space and staff will allow us to process more visas with reduced wait times.

Each of our posts throughout Mission China has significant renovation or expansion projects underway. Shanghai and Chengdu are expanding in their current facilities and will add additional adjudicating windows by spring 2013. Beijing is renovating the previous consular facility to reopen for public use by this summer. Guangzhou will move to a new consulate compound in April 2013, doubling its capacity, and we are considering a possible relocation of the consular section in Shenyang that would allow for expansion at this rapidly growing post. In Brazil, we will begin renovation projects at all four consulates in spring 2012. These projects increase the capacity of entryways and security screening, enlarge waiting rooms, add interview windows where possible, and improve foot traffic to shorten the amount of time applicants spend in the section. Additional windows for all four projects will be operational by December 2012.

The Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA) is planning for staffing increases to fill these new facilities and is adding more than 100 visa adjudicators this year and next in China and Brazil. A number of these new adjudicators are being hired through a pilot program that targets applicants who already speak Mandarin or Portuguese and will be arriving at posts through spring and summer of 2012. We are building a register of language-qualified potential employees that can be hired and deployed in response to changes in demand and as facility projects are completed and adjudicating windows are built. Some posts in China and Brazil have expanded their hours of operation to maximize use of staff and facilities.

For Brazil, Congress has received our official notification that we can begin the process to open two new consulates in Belo Horizonte and Porto Alegre, expanding our visa interview capacity to those metropolitan cities. These new facilities will help to reduce travel times for many applicants residing in those regions.

The visa interview pilot program is an additional step taken, worldwide, to further reduce applicant travel to U.S. embassies and consulates. Under the pilot program, consular officers may waive interviews for certain categories of qualified nonimmigrant visa applicants worldwide who are renewing their visas within 48 months of the expiration of their previously held visa, and within the same classification as the previous visa (i.e., a B1/B2 applicant applying for another B1/B2 visa). This new policy will make it much easier for many tourists to renew their visas, helping to free up as many as 100,000 interview appointments in China alone for first-time travelers. This program is also in place at many of our overseas posts, including Mexico, India, and Russia.

Under the pilot program, consular officers also may waive the interview and fingerprint collection requirement for certain qualified nonimmigrant visa applicants holding Brazilian passports worldwide who are younger than 16 years old or 66 years of age and older, so long as the required, thorough screening against biographic-based, immigration, law enforcement, and intelligence databases raises no concerns.

The Department of State is dedicated to the protection of our borders, and has no higher priority than the safety of our fellow citizens. At the same time, we are committed to facilitating legitimate travel, and providing prompt and courteous service. State will continue to monitor visa adjudications and visa interview wait times to measure success in our programs and adjust our planning for the future.

Question. One possibility to expedite the issuance of visas and ameliorate lengthy travel distances to consulates for prospective visitors would be for the State Department to conduct interviews in remote parts of countries which do not have easy access to consular posts. Videoconferencing technology is another potential solution to address these challenges. However, I understand the State Department does not currently plan to move ahead with remote visa interviews.

Why? Is it cost-prohibitive? Are there security concerns?

Answer. The Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) generally requires our consular officers to interview in-person all first-time visa applicants aged 14 through 79, but gives consular officers authority to waive interviews for diplomatic and official applicants from foreign governments and, in limited circumstances, some applicants renewing their visas. The INA also allows the Secretary of State to waive interviews in certain situations.

Among the provisions in State's fiscal year 2012 budget was a request that the Department explore alternative measures to meet the personal interview requirement, such as video visa interviewing. We have piloted this technology and have found it does not meet our strict security requirements. It is costly and less efficient than in-person interviews. Our conclusions are based on the following observations and results of our pilot:

—Use of this technology requires off-site facilities manned by American personnel with security clearances, and therefore subject to costly physical security and data-protection requirements.

—Permission to open such facilities and the legal status of employees could be an issue in some countries, particularly China. We found that moving applicants to and from the camera location and limiting the length of the interview is more challenging at an off-site video facility, thereby reducing the overall number of interviews conducted.

—Video interviewing presents unacceptable vulnerabilities. Consular officers are trained to use all of their senses to spot potential fraud or threats that might not be as readily observable over a two-dimensional video link.

We are continually looking for more efficient ways to improve the applicant's experience, without compromising security, particularly since a trip to the Embassy is often a foreign visitor's first impression of the United States. One way to accomplish this, among other things, is to decrease the number of people in the waiting room. Enhanced security screening in effect since September 11 makes it possible to eliminate interviews for certain very limited categories of applicants, without compromising border security requirements. This factor is why the Departments of State and Homeland Security have pursued secure, streamlining measures such as an Interview Waiver Pilot program to reduce the opportunity cost for those legitimate travelers who have been interviewed and vetted through a comprehensive, multi-layer process.

IMPLEMENTATION OF EXECUTIVE ORDER

Question. Under section 2(b) of the President's January 19, Executive order on travel and tourism, he directed development of an implementation plan by the Secretaries of State and Homeland Security within 60 days.

As it has been approximately 60 days since he issued that order, has the implementation plan been prepared?

Please describe the major highlights of the implementation plan and whether there are any items which require action by this subcommittee as we write the fiscal year 2013 homeland security bill.

Answer. Yes, the implementation plan was submitted to the President on March 19, 2012. State and DHS are committed to the facilitation of legitimate travel and tourism. This priority is a vital national interest that keeps our borders secure, while generating jobs and revenue critical to our economic growth and vitality.

Section 2(b) of the Executive order lays out the following four goals:

—(i) Increase nonimmigrant visa processing capacity in China and Brazil by 40 percent over the coming year;

—(ii) Ensure that 80 percent of nonimmigrant visa applicants are interviewed within 3 weeks of receipt of application;

—(iii) Increase efforts to expand the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) and travel by nationals of VWP participants; and

—(iv) Expand reciprocal recognition programs for expedited travel, such as the Global Entry program.

These four are whole-of-government goals, but for planning and implementation purposes, State will lead on goals (i) and (ii) and DHS will lead on goals (iii) and (iv).

State will increase staffing at our highest volume posts by:

—Increasing overall visa adjudicating positions in Brazil and China by 98 in 2012; and

—Hiring additional consular adjudicators with Portuguese and Chinese language ability via limited non-career appointments (LNAs).

State will increase the efficiency of its consular sections in China and Brazil by:

—Expanding interviewing hours in China and Brazil; and
—Implementing the Global Support Strategy (GSS) in Brazil and China as soon as feasible. GSS replaces the current patchwork of contractor-provided visa support services at overseas posts (e.g., call centers, appointment scheduling, and document delivery) with a single contract and comprehensive process for logistical arrangements preceding the actual adjudication process.

State will expand existing facilities and explore possibilities for additional visa-processing facilities in China and Brazil. We will:

—Remodel and renovate existing facilities, including adding 48 interview windows in China and 19 in Brazil;
—Expand existing facilities in China;
—Expand service hours and introduce multiple shifts where appropriate; and
—Assess the feasibility of establishing new visa-adjudicating locations.

State will implement the program to waive interviews for low-risk applicants, as described in the Executive order:

—Expand the eligibility for renewal of nonimmigrant visas for certain categories of applicants without interview from 1 to 4 years since expiration of the previous visa; and
—Streamline processing for certain Brazilian applicants younger than 16 years old and 66 years of age and older.

State will further improve its capacity to process visa applications in 2012 and beyond. As noted above, State is increasing staff, taking measures to increase efficiency, expanding facilities, implementing a pilot program to streamline processing for low-risk visa applicants (including the waiver of interviews for certain low-risk applicants), and monitoring progress to achieve these goals. These initiatives include an increase in visa adjudication staff by 50 percent in China and 130 percent in Brazil, resulting in capacity to adjudicate an additional 1.5 million adjudications per year by the end of 2012. The additional staff will permit us to introduce longer interview hours and they will work in expanded facilities. State is confident that the capacity- and efficiency-building measures described in this document, combined with further refinement of data collection, will allow it to meet the benchmark to increase visa interview capacity in Brazil and China 40 percent while also meeting its target of interviewing 80 percent of visa applicants worldwide within 3 weeks from when an application is submitted.

TRAVEL TO THE UNITED STATES: FROM A VISA WAIVER PROGRAM COUNTRY VS. A NON-VISA WAIVER PROGRAM COUNTRY

Question. One of the concerns I hear from constituents is how long it takes them to get a visa to travel to another country. At the same time, we are trying to expedite the issuance of visas for travel to this country.

If someone wanted to travel to the United States from a Visa Waiver Program country—like England or France—they do not have to get a visa.

Please describe what steps they must take to come here. What forms do they need to fill out and how much do they cost?

What about travelers to the United States from a non-Visa Waiver Program country—like Brazil or China?

What steps do they have to take and how long does it take?

Answer. The Visa Waiver Program (VWP) allows foreign nationals from certain countries to travel to the United States for business or pleasure, for stays of 90 days or less without obtaining a visa. Travelers admitted under the VWP must agree to waive their rights to review or appeal, as explained in the Waiver of Rights section of the Application screen. All passengers traveling under the VWP are required to have an approved Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) prior to traveling to the United States by air or sea. The program is administered by U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

Mandated by the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (9/11 Act), ESTA adds another layer of security that allows the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to determine whether an individual is eligible to travel to the United States under the VWP and whether such travel poses a law enforcement or security risk.

Travelers should submit their ESTA applications at least 72 hours prior to travel. However, not all travel is planned in advance and applications for last minute or emergency travel are accommodated.

To apply for ESTA, travelers need to complete an application at the ESTA Web site (https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov). Travelers must provide biographic information, passport data, credit card information for the required fees, and answer VWP eligibility questions. The traveler receives an application number that can be used to track

their ESTA application. CBP queries the traveler's information against the appropriate data bases to determine if the traveler is eligible for the VWP or if they provide a security or law enforcement threat to the United States.

Once the traveler's data has been screened he or she will receive one of three responses:

—*Authorization Approved*.—Travel is authorized and the authorization is valid for 2 years and any number of trips in the period, unless there is a change in status—for example, name change, marriage, VWP eligibility, or passport expiration;

—*Authorization Pending*.—An immediate determination could not be made and that the traveler should check back in 72 hours; or

—*Travel Not Authorized*.—The traveler is not eligible to travel the United States under the VWP and is advised to visit the U.S. Department of State Web site for additional information about applying for a visa.

All applicants requesting an electronic travel authorization are charged a $4 processing fee. If an application is approved and the traveler receives authorization to travel to the United States under the VWP, an additional $10 fee will be charged in accordance with the Travel Promotion Act of 2009.

For a national of a non-visa waiver country to apply for a visa, a potential traveler would follow these steps:

—Complete a visa application (form DS–160) online;

—Schedule an interview appointment at a U.S. Embassy or consulate. Scheduling procedures vary in each country. Wait times to obtain an appointment at each Embassy or consulate are available on the Bureau of Consular Affairs Web site at http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/wait/wait__4638.html, and are updated weekly;

—Pay the visa processing fee of $140 (increasing to $160 on April 13, 2012). Payment procedures vary in each country. In some countries, applicants can also submit digital fingerprints at an applicant service center any time prior to their interview date. If not, those digital fingerprints are taken at the appointment; and

—On the day of his/her interview appointment, visit the Embassy or consulate, to have his/her fingerprints taken (if not taken before), and appear before a United States consular officer, who has reviewed the application and security check results, for an interview. (In some instances, the officer may waive the interview for a qualified applicant renewing a visa.) The applicant must provide a valid passport, photo, and receipt for payment. Other forms or documents may be necessary depending on the type of visa and purpose of travel. Once cleared, the visa is printed, affixed in the passport, and returned to the applicant, usually through a courier service or express mail.

More than 70 percent of applicants worldwide obtain appointments in less than 3 weeks, and as we outlined in our written testimony, the Department has dedicated considerable resources to improve that figure. Approved visas are generally returned to applicants within 1 to 3 days. A very small number of cases may require additional processing, usually for security, legal, or administrative reasons.

Applicants for some visa categories, such as student or temporary employment, must meet additional requirements before making a visa application. For example, temporary workers generally require approved petitions filed through U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Students must be accepted by an approved educational institution, receive a confirmation form from the school (form I–20) and pay a fee to the Student and Exchange Visitor Program prior to their visa interview.

Question. At the hearing, one of the witnesses on the second panel raised concerns about the inability of the State Department to issue visas to foreign visitors to trade shows held in the United States and the loss of revenues related to those shows.

Please respond to these concerns.

Are there steps international visitors can take to improve their visa applications, including submitting them within a certain timeframe?

Answer. The Department of State understands the important economic benefits of foreign visitors at U.S. trade shows, particularly those from fast-growing economies who require visas to enter the United States. Large numbers of foreign attendees come to the United States without visas, either from Canada or the 36 countries participating in the Visa Waiver Program. In other countries, our embassies and consulates issue visas to many thousands of qualified trade show visitors and exhibitors each year.

While Department of State visa statistics do not capture issuance and refusal rates specifically for trade shows, according to attendance figures obtained from

three of the largest U.S. trade shows,[1] foreign participants last year ranged from 11 to 21 percent of total visitors to their shows. An average of 54 percent of the foreign visitors at these three shows entered the country using visas. Trade show participants from Canada and visa waiver countries averaged 46 percent of foreign attendees. By contrast, the proportion of overall U.S. international travelers who enter the United States using a visa each year is 35 to 40 percent. The remaining 60 to 65 percent of international travelers do not require visas (principally Canadians and Visa Waiver Program participants).

The higher proportion of trade show participants who entered with visas (54 percent compared with 35 to 40 percent among overall travelers) indicates that the U.S. visa process is not a barrier to foreign attendance at these events. On the contrary, Visa Office representatives in Washington routinely consult with event organizers to clearly and accurately inform them about general visa requirements and processing. The Visa Office's Business Visa Center (BVC) provides information to conference organizers and business travelers. The center also posts information about upcoming conferences on the Department's intranet site to inform consular officers about events and trade shows that expect more than 100 foreign participants. In 2011, the BVC handled over 3,400 inquiries, and in the first 3 months of 2012, has posted information about 66 conferences and trade shows that are expecting more than 153,000 foreign participants.

The Department of State is committed to facilitating legitimate business travel and supporting U.S. economic growth. All U.S. embassies and consulates have established procedures to expedite appointments for business travelers. U.S. officials work closely with American Chambers of Commerce in more than 100 countries to streamline the visa process for business travelers. Embassy Foreign Commercial Service and economic officers also work closely with visa sections, informing them about upcoming shows and country delegations. At the same time, each applicant must individually qualify for the visa they are seeking under U.S. immigration law. Unfortunately, a small minority of potential trade show attendees fail to satisfy this legal requirement. However, we note that a study by Oxford Economics commissioned by the Exhibition Industry Foundation said that only "3.1 percent of the total attendance of [surveyed] shows could not participate in the event because of visa issues. In addition, 1.3 percent of all exhibitors were not able to attend the 15 events that responded due to visa problems in attendance at those shows."

Visa applicants should apply as early as possible before travel, to allow for any processing that might be necessary. They should be prepared to discuss, if asked, the family, social and economic ties to their home country that show they are not at risk of remaining unlawfully in our country. Most visas are issued for multiple trips and are valid for as long as 10 years in many countries, depending on how that country treats U.S. citizen travelers, so applicants who anticipate future travel do not need to wait until just before their trip. Applicants can find extensive information about the visa process on the Bureau of Consular Affairs Web site at http://travel.state.gov.

Question. Your testimony delineates the number of specific steps State has already taken to reduce the time it takes to issue new visas to visitors from Brazil and China. However, there still appears to be the impression that large numbers of potential travelers are unable to visit the United States because of an inability to obtain a visa.

In your estimation, what percent of the potential traveling universe from these countries are first time visa requesters? Please describe this issue in more detail.

Does more need to be done to encourage multiple trips to the United States because many travelers already have multiple-entry visas?

For what reasons can an individual be denied a visa? Are all of these reasons specified in U.S. law?

Do many visa requesters apply for a visa with little notice or just days prior to their planned trip? What more can our Government do to encourage these individuals to apply for a visa on a timelier basis?

Answer. The vast majority of visa applicants in Brazil and China are legally eligible for visas and are being issued visas. In fiscal year 2011, we issued visas to more than 96 percent of Brazilian applicants and almost 90 percent of Chinese applicants.

The Department of State does not maintain statistics on the number of visa applications coming from first-time applicants. Available data does suggest that many visa holders make multiple trips to the United States. Comparing Department of Homeland Security admissions statistics for fiscal year 2010 (the most recent available) and the total number of visas issued in that year, we can see the number of

[1] Because attendance figures are proprietary, we are not able to name the three shows. They are among last year's top five U.S. trade exhibitions in attendance.

travelers to the United States far exceeds the number of visas issued during the year.

Fiscal year 2010	Nonimmigrant admissions (all categories)	Nonimmigrant visas issued (all categories)
Brazil	1,233,457	546,866
China	1,038,279	653,198

We do think that BrandUSA should target current visa holders as a group likely to return to the United States again and again.

Most visas are issued for multiple entries and for validity periods reciprocal to what the foreign government grants American travelers. In the last 7 years, for example, the United States issued Brazilians more than 2.6 million tourist visas (B1 and B2 categories), almost all of which can still be used for travel. Worldwide, from fiscal year 2007 to fiscal year 2010 alone, we issued more than 21 million visitor visas worldwide (categories B1, B2, and border crossing cards), the vast majority of which are still valid. This represents an enormous potential market for tourism promotion.

A visa can be denied only on grounds delineated in the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). The majority of nonimmigrant visa denials result from the applicant's failure to meet the requirements of INA section 214(b) which, in part, states: "Every alien . . . shall be presumed to be an immigrant until he establishes to the satisfaction of the consular officer, at the time of application for a visa. . . that he is entitled to a nonimmigrant status under section 101(a)(15)."

In the case of B1 and B2 visa applicants, INA section 214(b) relates to the applicants' failure to convince the interviewing officer that they have strong ties to a residence abroad that will compel them to leave the United States after a temporary visit.

INA section 212(a) lists other grounds of inadmissibility to the United States, including criminal convictions, affiliation with terrorist organizations, drug trafficking, fraud, among others. INA section 291 places the burden of proof on the applicant to establish he or she is eligible to receive a visa.

In all of our public outreach on visas, the Department of State urges potential travelers to apply early. We make available on our public Web site (http://travel.state.gov) the lead times necessary to obtain interview appointments at each of our visa-issuing posts. This information is updated weekly so that travelers can realistically plan ahead.

In fact, more than 70 percent of applicants worldwide obtain appointments in less than 3 weeks, and as we outlined in our written testimony, the Department has dedicated considerable resources to improve this figure. We are committed to achieving the goal the President laid out in Executive Order 13597 that "80 percent of nonimmigrant visa applicants are interviewed within three weeks of receipt of application." Once approved, visas are generally available to applicants within several days. (A small number of cases may require additional processing, usually for security, legal or administrative reasons.) All of our visa-issuing posts have procedures to expedite cases with medical, humanitarian, national interest, or urgent business travel, as well as other cases having a legitimate need for rapid handling.

NONDEPARTMENTAL WITNESSES

Senator LANDRIEU. First, we have Roger Dow, president and CEO of the U.S. Travel Association; second, Charles Barclay, president of the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE); third, Thomas Hendricks, senior vice president of Safety, Security and Operations for Airlines for America (A4A); Mr. Steven Hacker, president and CEO of the International Association of Exhibitions and Events; and Sara Nelson, international vice president, the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA).

Take your seats in any order, ladies and gentlemen. Mr. Dow, if you do not mind, we will start with you. And if you all could limit your opening statements to 3 minutes each, that will leave us approximately 15 or so minutes for questions to the panel. And so Mr. Dow, let us start with you. And if there is anything that you heard in the first panel that you would like to raise, add to your statement, please feel free. But let us leave it to 3 minutes.

STATEMENT OF ROGER DOW, PRESIDENT AND CEO, U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

Mr. DOW. Very fine. Thank you, Madam Chairman, for holding this hearing. It is so important, and I will skip going through how big the industry is because you did a great job off the bat. Lots of jobs, huge industry.

The critical role that DHS and the State Department have in working and facilitating commerce and travel and protecting our country we will all concur on. We really thank you for all the bipartisan leadership on this issue because it is a white hat issue. I mean, we all believe in increasing travel, jobs, et cetera.

But we sincerely believe that we can have a robust economy and a robust tourism industry and very secure by making a few changes and modifications in some of the things that we are doing right now.

I am going to divide my testimony into two parts. One, I am going to talk domestically and I want to address TSA, which was talked about.

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) predicts that in 20 years, air traffic will double. So it is going to be 1.2 billion travelers. So the concern is what does that mean for longer lines if we just keep doing things the way we are. Sooner or later, this thing falls in on itself. In 2010, we did a survey and we asked people if you knew you had dependability and if you knew it was a short, defined amount of time, would you travel more. And people said they would take two or three more trips. That is $85 billion, and when you look at that, that is hundreds of thousands of jobs that that creates. We think there is a way to really increase this significantly. If you look at that $85 billion that we could have had, we want to make sure we do not have that same loss going forward.

So we have submitted, in conjunction with AAAE and CLEAR, a way that we could find a way to rapidly increase the number of people that go on the Pre✓™ program because we think that is extremely valuable and have a way that people could be enrolled like in New Orleans. To go in Global Entry, you have to go to Houston and it is a long way. So we are recommending ways to increase that, and that is very critical.

When you look at inbound travel, expanding that—and first of all, I do applaud Administrator Pistole for what they have done on really stepping forward with Pre✓™. It is a great beginning, but we can take it much further because we have to get a lot more than those 6,000 people a day going through the system or it is like an HOV lane that does not work.

So when we take a look at what is going on with inbound travel, if you look at long-haul travel to the United States, we now get 12 percent of inbound travel around the world. We used to get 17 percent. We have lost a huge amount of money. That is $153 billion. But if we can get back to where we were years ago, that would be $400 billion to the U.S. economy, 1.3 million jobs over decades. It is big. And we can do that through several ways.

One, expanding the visa issuance process. We think a great job is being done there. The numbers that Mr. Donahue talked about have been nothing less than outstanding over the past year. But we can expand that greatly.

Also, we need to find a way to get more people into this program, and when you look at the visa waiver program, that is one that we believe can be increased. There are 100 and some countries around the world. We have 36 countries in there. And there are relatively few countries with security that could really be looked at. If we could get them into the visa waiver program, that would be terrific.

And last, the immigration process of how people come in. It is just as important to have a welcoming and efficient process, and if we are going to increase the visa process by 40 percent—I did some quick calculation—that is going to add $70 million to what we do. And somehow we ought to figure out how to use that money at both ends of the spectrum.

And last, you asked a question about video conferencing, and I applaud your putting it in there. That has not happened as far as the pilot, and we believe that just as Ranking Member Coats asked, is there technology—and we really believe you have to test it. We have to put technology to work or these things will fall in on themselves. We have to try this. And we are going to watch. We talked about the Indiana game. We are going to watch basketball. We are going to watch people on high definition, 100-inch TVs. I am going to be able to tell whether someone is going to make that foul shot or not just looking at their eye. You can see that. Plus, it gives you a chance to record it, have other people look at. So we believe we should pilot this program that you have proposed, and we would hope to work with you and with the State Department to make that happen.

PREPARED STATEMENT

Thank you very much for your help and all you do for this industry.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROGER DOW

Chairman Landrieu, Ranking Member Coats and members of the subcommittee: I am pleased to offer testimony on behalf of the U.S. Travel Association (U.S. Travel), the national, nonprofit organization representing all sectors of America's travel industry. U.S. Travel's mission is to increase travel to and within the United States. Last year the $813 billion travel industry generated a total of $1.9 trillion in total economic output.

I applaud you for holding today's hearing to discuss the critical role the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) plays in facilitating travel and commerce, and protecting our country. I would also like to thank you for the strong bipartisan leadership you have demonstrated on travel issues during your time here in Washington.

Travel provides good, domestic jobs that cannot be outsourced. In 2011, travel supported 14.4 million jobs and is among the top 10 employers in 48 U.S. States and the District of Columbia. For example, travel directly employs more than 100,000 Louisianans, contributes $8.9 billion annually to the Louisiana economy and generates more than $1.1 billion in State and local tax revenue. Similarly, travel directly employs more than 96,000 Indianans, contributes more than $8.6 billion to the Indiana economy and generates nearly $1.3 billion in tax receipts. In every region of America, travel helps pay the salaries of police, firefighters, and teachers without creating much new demand for those public services.

I am here today to tell you that increasing travel in the United States is the most effective form of economic stimulus—and it doesn't cost taxpayers a dime. When American and international visitors travel within the United States, they inject new money into the U.S. economy by staying in U.S. hotels, spending in U.S. stores, visiting U.S. attractions, and eating at U.S. restaurants. And spending by international travelers is chalked up as U.S. exports that contribute positively to America's trade balance. In fact, international travel is the export sector that should be easiest to boost.

Larry Summers, the former director of the National Economic Council, recently observed that "the easiest way to increase exports and close the trade gap is by increasing international travel to the United States."

But the 10 years from 2001 through 2010 were a lost decade for America's travel industry and the U.S. economy. While global international travel grew over the last decade, America failed to keep pace. The opportunity costs of this slippage are staggering. If America had kept pace with the growth in global long-haul international travel between 2000 and 2010, 78 million more travelers would have visited the United States, adding a total of $606 billion to the U.S. economy that could support more than 467,000 additional U.S. jobs annually over these years.

Unlike other goods and services, the barriers to travel are primarily self-imposed. There are no trade agreements to be negotiated or tariffs to reduce with other countries. The principle barriers to increased travel to and within the United States are the inefficiencies, uncertainties, and delays that characterize our visa, entry, and passenger screening process. These self-imposed restrictions discourage Americans and overseas visitors from traveling within the United States.

It is unconscionable that in a time of weak economic growth, followed by deep recession, inefficient security, and travel facilitation programs caused America to leave so much economic prosperity on the table. We cannot afford to make the same mistakes in this current decade. As described below, these lost opportunities are not a tradeoff with security—we can have robust, growing, and secure travel.

IMPLEMENT RISK-BASED AND EFFICIENT PASSENGER SCREENING

Over the next 20 years, air passenger travel will almost double to 1.2 billion passengers per year, according to projections released last week by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). This forecast may seem like an indicator of robust growth and increased job creation in the years ahead. But given our Nation's inefficient and costly security screening process, and the growing level of passenger frustrations—the FAA is really forecasting longer lines and wait-times at security checkpoints and potentially greater economic losses for the travel industry.

To understand the potential magnitude of problems in the future, it is helpful to examine the costs imposed by the current system. A 2010 survey conducted by Consensus Research found that travelers would take two to three more flights per year if the hassles in security screening were reduced. These additional flights would add nearly $85 billion in consumer spending back into local hotels, restaurants, convention centers, and other travel business, and help support 900,000 jobs.

An inefficient screening process also imposes a staggering cost on the American tax payer. From 2004 to 2011, the TSA's budget rose by 68 percent, while the number of passengers screened remained almost flat.[1] If these trends continue, TSA's budget would spiral out of control as passenger levels increase.

The only way to avoid this scenario is for TSA to become a more risk-based, intelligence-driven, and cost-effective organization.

In 2011, TSA recently launched PreCheck (Pre✓™), a trusted traveler pilot program that provides expedited screening for passengers willing to volunteer more personal information. Pre✓™ is an essential first step in creating a more efficient and secure screening process, and I applaud Administrator Pistole for his leadership in creating this program.

Today, roughly 400,000 Americans are enrolled in Pre✓™, which is small number compared to the 2 million people who fly each day. The future success of the program will depend on the operational efficiencies and cost-savings realized when more low-risk travelers use the program on a frequent basis.

Unfortunately, there are several barriers preventing ordinary Americans from joining and using Pre✓™. One way to join the program is to be a member of U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP's) Global Entry program. To be a part of Global Entry, CBP requires an in-person interview but only offers these interviews at 25 permanent locations. If a person living in New Orleans wishes to join Global Entry, the closest CBP interview location is in Houston, Texas—nearly a 6-hour drive away. Alternatively, if the same person wanted to qualify for Pre✓™ through an airline frequent flier program, U.S. Travel estimates that it would cost roughly $10,000 in airfare paid to a single airline in order to accrue enough frequent flier miles to qualify.[2]

Moreover, once a traveler is enrolled in Pre✓™ through a frequent flier program, they can only use the expedited screening lanes when flying with that particular airline—in airports where Pre✓™ is established. For example, an American Airlines Pre✓™ customer who buys an American Airlines ticket for travel from JFK airport to Miami International, would have access to the Pre✓™ lane. If that same customer decides to fly Delta airlines on the return flight home, he or she would not have access to the Pre✓™ lane, simply because they are not flying with American Airlines. In our opinion, risk should not be determined by your loyalty to any one airline.

Fortunately, there are many innovative ways to bolster the Pre✓™ program. TSA and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) can increase participation in Pre✓™ by expanding CBP's trusted traveler programs and allowing travelers to qualify by aggregating their frequent flier miles across multiple airlines. Additionally, once a passenger is enrolled in the program, Pre✓™ passengers should be immediately granted access to any Pre✓™ lane.

But TSA must also offer enrollment opportunities beyond CBP trusted travelers and elite frequent fliers if the program is going to succeed. In 2011, the U.S. Travel Association, the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE), and CLEAR submitted to TSA a joint proposal for expanding Pre✓™. Under our proposal, TSA would establish a new set of eligibility requirements for participation in the program. U.S. Travel, AAAE, CLEAR, and TSA would then work to create enrollment procedures that meet these requirements by using proven and operationally ready methods of identity verification and risk assessment. Once these procedures are in place, our organizations could quickly increase enrollment in Pre✓™ by leveraging CLEAR's existing base of 200,000 members and providing additional outlets for enrollment in places frequented by travelers—including airport, hotel, rental car, and convention center lobbies. Additionally, CLEAR is willing to explore a partnership with CBP whereby persons who enroll in Pre✓™ through CLEAR would be offered reimbursement for the CBP trusted traveler application fees.

TSA is considering various aspects of our proposal and we look forward to working with them in the future to expand Pre✓™ and ensure its future success.

PROMOTE AND EXPAND INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Just as FAA is predicting a significant increase in domestic air travel, international air travel is expected to grow as well. On a worldwide basis, total international tourist arrivals are projected to grow 36 percent between 2010 and 2020,

[1] U.S. Travel Association, "A Better Ways: Building a World-Class System for Aviation Security." http://www.ustravel.org/sites/default/files/page/2011/03/A__Better__Way__032011.pdf

[2] TSA considers enrollment criteria for Pre✓™ to be security sensitive information. The U.S. Travel Association calculated an estimate of the cost to join Pre✓™ by multiplying the average 2010 passenger yield (the average fare paid by domestic passengers per mile flown) of ¢13.49 by 75,000 (the number of miles needed to become a platinum customer on Delta airlines).

resulting in $2.2 trillion in direct travel spending and 62 million jobs. Over the same period, international travel revenue as a share of global GDP is forecast to increase by 10 percent. This presents enormous economic and diplomatic opportunities of the United States.

Increasing secure travel to the United States is an integral part of a successful foreign policy. As noted by a Federal advisory committee to the Departments of Homeland Security and State in 2008:

> Our long-term success requires not only that we deter and detect determined adversaries, but also that we persuade millions of people around the globe of our ideals—democratic freedom, private enterprise, human rights, intellectual pursuit, technological achievement. That persuasion requires human interaction, and each visitor to the United States represents such an opportunity. Raw statistics are important in analyzing our achievements and challenges, but so are the attitudes we display. Treating prospective and actual visitors with dignity and respect will reinforce, not diminish, our security.

The travel industry is also a leading source of U.S. exports. When visitors travel to the United States from abroad, they inject new money into our economy by staying in our hotels, shopping at our stores, visiting our attractions and eating at our restaurants. In many cases, they are also here to conduct business that can lead to significant sales of U.S. products and services in overseas markets. Every dollar these visitors spend in the United States counts as an export—just like agricultural crops, minerals, or manufactured goods. International travel to the United States generated more than $134 billion in exports in 2010, supported 1.8 million U.S. jobs, and made travel the Nation's leading industry export.

In May 2011, the U.S. Travel Association released a comprehensive report which studied the effects of the visa process on international travel to the United States and found that delays, cost, access, and unpredictability in the U.S. visa system served as a barrier for potential visitors and contributed to our lost market share. The travel industry rallied together in support of recommendations in the U.S. Travel Association's report that would help to reform the visa process in key high-growth and high-spend markets such as Brazil, China, and India.

While reforms can often be difficult to implement and are rarely done quickly, we greatly appreciate the support and attention Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources Tom Nides, and U.S. Ambassador to China Gary Locke have dedicated to improving the U.S. visa process in China and Brazil over the last year. The State Department has undertaken several steps, most importantly dedicating more personnel and resources toward visa adjudication. Among the Department's recent initiatives are:

—Adding 100 visa adjudicators in China and Brazil, many of whom are being hired through a pilot program that targets applicants with Mandarin and Portuguese language skills.
—Extending hours at some posts in China and Brazil at existing facilities to process more visa applicants.
—Expanding visa-processing facilities to allow for increased interview capacity of applicants.
—Opening a new Embassy consular facility in Beijing to increase visa interview capacity in by 50 percent.
—Initiating a new pilot program that permits consular officers to waive interviews for some qualified non-immigrant applicants worldwide who are renewing their visa within 48 months of the expiration of their previously held visa, and within the same classification as the previous visa.
—In Brazil, permitting consular officers to waive interviews for applicants 15 years and under and 66 and older.
—Sending temporary duty officers to manage seasonal spikes in visa application demand.

Furthermore, we applaud the President for issuing Executive Order 13597 which gives this issue the prominence it deserves, and offers the vision and commitment we have long needed to reap the economic, security and public diplomacy rewards that will come from improving our competitiveness in the global travel market.

We look forward to working with the new Task Force on Travel and Competitiveness that was created by the Executive order to help fulfill the enormous promise of America's travel industry and strengthen our economy's leading industry export. However, there is also a clear role for Congress to help advance policy that will increase legitimate international travel. I will focus on three key areas: the entry experience at U.S. international airports, the visa issuance process, and the Visa Waiver Program.

VISA ISSUANCE PROCESS

As I mentioned, visa issuance process will be a critical factor in determining whether the United States will regain the 17-percent global travel market share we once held and whether we can match the market power our Western European competitors currently enjoy in the thriving Brazilian, Chinese, and Indian travel markets.

We believe Congress can play a key role in ensuring that the reforms the State Department has implemented to reduce the backlog in visa processing in Brazil and China are replicated in other countries and that they are sustained over time. In our view, Congress should codify a 2-week visa processing standard. Furthermore, a consistent set of metrics that indicate the efficiency, effectiveness, and consumer friendliness of visa application and adjudication should be maintained and be used to analyze and continually improve performance and optimize deployment of resources. The performance metrics related to visa application and adjudication and those related to entry of international travelers, both citizens and non-citizens, should be globally benchmarked. For example, the State Department needs to develop a short-term and long-term plan for addressing visa processing problems in key emerging markets (Brazil, China, and India) and measure its visa processing performance against Western European countries competing for these visitors. Progress assessments should be evaluated by GAO annually; both the report and assessment should be submitted to Congress for review. The State Department should develop a formal tracking mechanism to measure results, and its annual budget request should reflect the resources required to these meet targets.

Another area for Congress to engage is in providing greater access to a U.S. visa interview for thousands of applicants. The visa application fee is $140 but the real cost of obtaining a U.S. visa is far greater, particularly when potential visitors do not live near a consular post issuing visas and therefore must travel hundreds if not thousands of miles and pay for a flight and hotel to make a mandatory trip to a U.S. consulate for an interview that on average lasts for 3 minutes.

Thanks to the leadership of Senator Landrieu and others on this subcommittee, the fiscal year 2012 omnibus appropriations bill included language that granted the State Department the authority to develop and conduct a pilot program that would use secure videoconferencing technology to interview visa applicants remotely. Ensuring security of the videoconferencing transmission and encryption must be a top priority. Therefore, we support granting Federal agents access to the recorded interview videos as well as ensuring that the State Department works with other Federal agencies that regularly transmit real-time video, biometric, and document data through secure means. Unfortunately, the State Department has stated that it does not intend to carry out a pilot of the technology. We hope to work with the subcommittee and the State Department on this issue to find a way to move a pilot forward. The fact is we live in a world where technology can help us solve problems but we must be open to testing it.

Furthermore, the lack of reliable information regarding applicant backlogs makes it difficult to identify consulates where demand is not being properly met. The GAO reported, "Wait times generally do not provide a sense of applicant backlog, which is the number of people who are waiting to be scheduled for an appointment or the number of people who have an appointment but have yet to be seen."[3] In order to better understand and manage workload, staffing and throughput, it is critical that the State Department develop a better measure of applicant backlogs and use that information to deploy resources more efficiently and develop annual budget requests.

The State Department should also set a standard for capping interview dates at consulates to prevent consulates from artificially limiting appointment dates which only serves to mislead applicants about the actual interview wait times. The GAO noted in its report: "We observed that some posts artificially limit wait times by tightly controlling the availability of future appointment slots—such as by not making appointments available beyond a certain date, which can make appointment scheduling burdensome for the applicant who must continually check for new openings."[4] We believe that individual posts should not control the availability of appointment slots to artificially limit wait times. We urge the State Department to publish specific guidance on this issue.

The lack of reliable information about the visa system, its current performance and its ability to meet future demand makes it all the more difficult to make im-

[3] GAO, "Border Security: Long-term Strategy Needed to Keep Pace with Increasing Demand for Visas". (13–JUL–07, GAO–07–847)

[4] Ibid.

provements. However, we know that improving the performance and competitiveness of the visa processing system must begin with transparency. We recommend a system of ongoing information sharing that should take place at least annually—and in some cases monthly. This data should include:

—Monthly visa interview wait times for each consulate so that travelers can view historical information and make informed decisions about when to apply.

—Consulate throughput capacity and ability to meet projected visa demand.

VISA WAIVER PROGRAM

The most economical and powerful step the U.S. Government can take to improve the performance and competitiveness of the visa processing system while maintaining national security is to sign bilateral visa-free travel agreements with new countries as part of the Visa Waiver Program (VWP). Visitors from VWP countries played a leading role in making travel the leading service export for our Nation. VWP countries are the largest source of inbound overseas travel to the United States. According to Commerce Department data, over 17 million VWP visitors, 65 percent of all visitors from overseas traveled to the United States in 2010. While here, they spent more than $61 billion, supporting 433,000 American jobs along with $12 billion in payroll, and generating $9 billion in Government tax revenues. Countries in the VWP must agree to adopt strict security measures, strong travel document standards, and enhanced information sharing agreements with the United States. In addition, each traveler from a participating country must also obtain pre-clearance to board a flight to the United States through the Electronic System Travel Authorization (ESTA).

We strongly support the recommendation in the President's recent Executive order on travel and tourism, that the U.S. Government increase its efforts to expand the VWP. We are pleased that the administration has nominated Taiwan for participation in the VWP and we support Taiwan's inclusion. In the short-term we also believe the Departments of State and Homeland Security should immediately begin bilateral negotiations with countries that are prospective candidates for the VWP.

Recently, the U.S. Travel Association studied the economic impact of including the 11 likeliest candidates for VWP status: Argentina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Croatia, Israel, Panama, Poland, Romania, Taiwan, and Uruguay. Last year, 3 million visitors from these countries spent $14 billion in the United States, directly supporting 104,300 jobs in the American travel industry. In the first year of participation in the VWP, the growth rate of visitation from these countries would nearly double. If that first year were 2012, VWP status would generate an additional 482,000 arrivals and $5.1 billion more in total revenue. VWP eligibility would quickly drive up arrivals from these 11 nations to 4 million visitors with an overall economic impact exceeding $41 billion, supporting 256,000 American jobs. The 32,200 additional U.S. jobs created this year would be eight times more than employment at the largest auto assembly plant in Michigan.

Every potential new VWP visitor from Brazil, Poland, and other key markets constitutes, in effect, a walking economic stimulus package. Each has the desire and means to travel to the United States, for business and/or pleasure; and rarely do these visits require additional U.S. infrastructure. It is just a question of whether our entry process is welcoming or discouraging, as compared with destinations in other nations.

Another key goal of the Visa Waiver Program is to improve standards for air security, travel documents, and international law enforcement collaboration. As a condition of participation in the program, VWP countries must follow strict counter-terrorism, border security, law enforcement, and document security guidelines, as well as participate in information-sharing arrangements with the United States. VWP countries must issue International Civil Aviation Organization-compliant electronic passports; report information on all lost and stolen passports to the United States through Interpol; and share information on travelers who may pose a terrorist or criminal threat to the United States. As a result, our Government is able to supplement our watch-list database with information from the travelers' home governments. In addition, each VWP traveler must also obtain pre-clearances to board a flight to the United States through the Electronic System for Travel Authorization.

Taken together, these eligibility requirements ensure compliance with elevated security standards and cooperation with United States law enforcement. This enables us to better detect, apprehend, and limit the movement of terrorists, criminals, and other dangerous travelers—and to shift limited visa screening resources to higher risk countries.

The most effective ambassadors of American values are ordinary Americans. Citizens from VWP countries who travel to the United States for tourism or business

form life-long impressions of American society based on their visits to destinations, large and small, across America. From our national parks to our ball parks to our theme parks, the heartland of our great Nation reflects the best of the United States to foreign visitors. The more they know us, the better they like us.

Surveys have shown that foreigners who have the opportunity to visit the United States are 74 percent more likely to have a favorable view of our country; and that 61 percent are more likely to support the United States and its policies. Moreover, the mere agreement itself to establish a visa waiver relationship reinforces bilateral goodwill. While its explicit mission is to enhance security and encourage travel, the Visa Waiver Program has also demonstrated significant public diplomacy value as a "soft power" tool that complements our formal foreign policy mechanisms.

By strengthening our alliances and enhancing our Nation's global image, the Visa Waiver Program has helped to keep us safer. By facilitating more efficient flow of overseas visitors for legitimate business and leisure at a time when the global travel market is booming, VWP expansion offers enormous export opportunity for the U.S. travel and tourism sector across the entire Nation.

That is why we strongly support bipartisan legislation introduced earlier this congressional session by Senator Mikulski (D-MD) and Senator Kirk (R-IL) which would reform the criteria for being admitted to the Visa Waiver Program, with the intent to accelerate VWP expansion (S. 2046). We urge Congress to make passage of this legislation a top priority this year.

The stakes are high for every American business seeking to host meetings with international customers, for dozens of international trade shows each year whose foreign clients need to enter the United States on a deadline, and for tens of thousands of U.S. workers and businesses dependent on a vibrant inbound travel market. We appreciate your ongoing interest in ensuring an efficient entry process and look forward to continuing to work closely with you to move this legislation forward.

IMMIGRATION PROCESSING UPON ARRIVAL INTO THE UNITED STATES

How international visitors are treated when they arrive in the United States and is just as important as the visa process. Over the last decade, as recommended by the 9/11 Commission, the U.S. Government has rightly built additional layers of security into America's border entry process. However, the way some of these policies are implemented has had the unintended effect of alienating some international travelers. Overseas visitors complain about hour-long waits at the inspection areas at airports and of unfriendly treatment by inspection officials.

This negative perception of the U.S. entry process was on full display in 2009 when President Obama traveled to Copenhagen to help promote Chicago's bid for the Olympic Games. An International Olympic Committee (IOC) member from Pakistan, in the question-and-answer session following Chicago's official presentation, pointed out to the President that entering the United States can be "a rather harrowing experience."

When IOC members are expressing concern to our President about the kind of welcome international visitors would get from airport officials when they arrive in this country to attend the Olympic Games, we need to take seriously the challenge of reforming our entry process to make sure we are welcoming our friends around the world, even as we ensure a secure system.

Since 2006, our industry has partnered with DHS and CBP to offer strategic advice on how to provide improved customer service and increased efficiency in traveler facilitation. CBP has implemented some recommendations quite effectively, such as the adoption of a welcome video—produced by Disney—that is now played at all major international U.S. airports. CBP also created the Global Entry program to fast-track previously vetted Americans and select international visitors returning from international trips. But much more remains to be done.

The Department of Homeland Security should aim to process all international arriving passengers within 30 minutes at the primary inspection area. This can be done by developing and implementing a comprehensive and automated staffing model to improve passenger facilitation. In addition to the workload staffing model, CBP should also expand the staffing workload alignment tool (SWAT) to additional airports in order to better anticipate short-term staffing demands and reduce wait times at primary inspection areas. To meet these goals, the DHS appropriations bill for fiscal year 2013 should fund CBP adequately to implement appropriate staffing reforms included in the workload staffing model to decrease wait times at airports of entry.

U.S. Travel also encourages the establishment of baseline data and the development clear staffing metrics in order to assess the efficiency of CBP's workforce. The

development of performance metrics will increase agency accountability and ensure effective use of their current resources.

The Department of Homeland Security should ensure that the $110 million in annual funding resulting from the elimination of the COBRA fee exemptions from Canadian, Caribbean, and Mexican air and sea travelers be reinvested into CBP staffing and facilitation at air and sea ports of entry.

U.S. Travel remains concerned that a shortage of inspection agents continues to produce excessive delays in processing international passengers at some of this Nation's highest volume international airports. Some international airports note that thousands of passengers arriving from long flights are experiencing delays of up to 3 hours due to inadequate staffing. We would like to work with your subcommittee to find a sensible funding solution to ensure adequate staffing is provided to process international travelers visiting our Nation. We also encourage CBP to enhance transparency and reporting related to airport wait times data. We recommend that the fiscal year 2013 DHS appropriations bill should require this information to be published on CBP's Web site and submitted to the subcommittee through a comprehensive report on a quarterly basis.

These long delays in processing hurt the undoubtedly hurt customer experience and discourage travelers from visiting or doing business in the United States. The fiscal year 2013 DHS appropriations bill should include provisions contained in the House DHS Authorization bill to improve CBP transparency and customer service through the implementation of a comprehensive system to collect, analyze, respond to traveler comments. In addition, the legislation includes requirements for CBP to set baseline standards and implement clear metrics to track progress of customer services related issues and establish agency best practices.

Lastly, CBP should increase the number of nations participating in the Global Entry program and implement fully those reciprocal agreements signed to date with the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Korea, among others, so that the maximum number of foreign nationals can be signed up under Global Entry. We recommend that CBP provide a more user-friendly process for individual registration to the program, including simplifying the online application and providing additional staff and locations for in-person interviews in order to ensure conditionally approved applicants are interviewed within 6 weeks.

CLOSING

If this country is serious about becoming more competitive in a global economy, Congress and the administration have to encourage Americans and legitimate international visitors to travel in the United States by reducing unnecessary hassles and barriers, while maintaining necessary security. The stakes are enormous. Our own analysis shows that if the United States recaptured its historic share of worldwide overseas—or long-haul—travel by 2015 and maintained that share through 2020, it would add nearly $100 billion to the economy over the next decade and create nearly 700,000 more U.S. jobs. Increasing America's share of worldwide long-haul travel is a no-brainer and, with the right policies, should be relatively easy to do.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you, Mr. Dow. And your focus on using technology to help solve these problems I really appreciate.

Mr. Barclay.

STATEMENT OF CHARLES M. BARCLAY, PRESIDENT, AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF AIRPORT EXECUTIVES

Mr. BARCLAY. Thank you, Chair Landrieu.

I would just like to make three very brief points because a lot of our testimony repeats what Roger and the first panel have said.

The first is that airport executives strongly support the philosophy behind RBS and the Trusted Traveler programs. We congratulate the Department on both Pre✓™ and Global Entry. I particularly want to point out Administrator Pistole deserves great credit for taking Pre✓™ from theory to practice. It is something that has been debated for far too long over the last 10 years, as you have noted.

Second, RBS is not an option. We have to go to more efficient use of our limited screening resources. Passenger growth alone will overwhelm our facilities and our checkpoints if we do not make

more efficient use of intelligence and information that people are willing to provide on themselves.

And third, airports want to be of greater help. Airports would like to engage in local enrollment of trusted populations in order to expand the numbers of people going through Pre✓™. We have a number of both large and small airports that are eager to do this for the frequent travelers in their communities, but people who do not travel enough to be on one airline's high level frequent flyer list or they may not travel internationally and be thinking of Global Entry.

This is not just a theoretical offer. Airports own the Transportation Security Clearinghouse which has processed 12 million biometric and biographic background checks to Federal Government standards for airport workers and passengers in the past 10 years. We have a number of airports that want to take that process and on a voluntary basis airports would market enrollment again to trusted communities locally and brand it for themselves.

PREPARED STATEMENT

Finally, the key to Pre✓™ is to fill up those lanes. If we do not fill those lanes—at a lot of airports, you cannot put a new lane in. So if you designate a lane for Pre✓™ and put the resources there, we need to get the volume going through there. Airports are eager to quickly help engage in enrollment and make sure that we are putting enough volume through those lanes in order to justify them, and in both kinds of lanes, it will speed passengers' screening process.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CHARLES M. BARCLAY

Senator Landrieu, Senator Coats, and members of the subcommittee, on behalf of the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE)—the world's largest airport organization, representing thousands of men and women across the country who manage and operate the Nation's airports—I want to thank you for the opportunity to participate in this important hearing on the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) travel programs and initiatives. We appreciate the subcommittee's continued focus on enhancing security, efficiency, and passenger satisfaction in air travel and look forward to working with you toward that end in the months ahead as you develop fiscal year 2013 Department of Homeland Security appropriations legislation.

Although airport operators do not have a direct role in screening passengers at airport checkpoints or in processing international air travelers, airport professionals are committed to enhancing security and efficiency at their facilities and serve as important partners to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in meeting their respective missions in these areas. Airport executives remain strongly committed to working collaboratively with the Federal Government to expedite checkpoint screening and international facilitation, and we are encouraged by recent developments with the implementation by DHS of intelligence-driven, risk-based programs, including CBP's Global Entry and TSA's PreCheck (Pre✓™) trusted traveler programs.

On the international facilitation front, DHS and CBP leaders should be commended for initiating and growing the Global Entry program, which is showing demonstrable benefits at a number of international airports across the country. Continued expansion and utilization of Global Entry combined with additional CBP staffing at international airports are key to the timely processing of international travelers and ensuring that the United States remains a prime tourist and travel destination—a goal that has profound implications for the broader U.S. economy. A group of international gateway airports known as the G–10 have done extensive work on international facilitation issues and have a series of specific recommendations that I have included at the end of my testimony. I urge the subcommittee to give these recommendations careful consideration as well.

We also appreciate the administration's efforts to encourage international travel and tourism with recently announced initiatives, including the enhancement of the Global Entry and Visa Waiver programs. Notably, AAAE Airport Alliance Chair and Chicago Department of Aviation Commissioner Rosie Andolino has been appointed by the President to the U.S. Travel and Tourism Advisory Board and will play a key role in addressing travel facilitation, visa policy, improving the international travel experience, and other important topics as part of that group.

Domestically, airport executives are equally enthusiastic about the roll-out and announced expansion of the TSA Pre✓™ program. Administrator Pistole and his team deserve immense credit for their leadership in moving forward with the program and other risk-based initiatives. We also appreciate the support and funding the initiative received from this subcommittee and Congress in fiscal year 2012, as you have highlighted previously, Madam Chair.

Airport executives anticipate great success with Pre✓™ and recognize that the next challenge will be moving from a largely airline-centric program in operation at merely a handful of airports to one that is operational for large numbers of travelers at airport facilities across the country. As you know, Pre✓™ in its current form is available only to certain elite travelers on specific airlines and participants in the CBP Global Entry program who fly on participating air carriers.

Airport executives would like to see the program expanded to accommodate as many additional, qualified travelers as possible through a community based, airport-centric approach that allows vastly larger populations of travelers to enroll and participate in Pre✓™-approved programs on an airport-by-airport basis and become trusted through Government-approved vetting protocols. While airline-based programs and Global Entry are good avenues in enrolling qualified participants, additional efforts will be needed to accommodate a broader range of qualified travelers—a goal that airports, the traveling public, and the Government share.

Some have argued that the Global Entry process is sufficient in and of itself as an enrollment platform. It is worth noting, however, that only roughly one-third of the U.S. population currently holds a valid passport, based on recent statistics from the State Department. Since holding a valid passport is a requirement for Global Entry participation, some two-thirds of the American public is currently ineligible for participation through that process—a fact that highlights the need for a more robust approach.

Airports Are Eager To Partner With DHS To Expand Trusted Traveler Programs

AAAE and airports have long supported the trusted traveler concept that underlies both the Global Entry and Pre✓™ programs, and we are actively working with CBP and TSA in an effort to rapidly expand the population of passengers participating in these programs, which virtually everyone knowledgeable about the program acknowledges is necessary to maximize the efficiency and security benefits achieved by focusing limited DHS resources on higher risk passengers. We are also working collaboratively with DHS to address related issues affecting program expansion, including checkpoint configuration, queue management, modified LEO response expectations, and public outreach and communication.

Airports long ago recognized that there was great potential value in terms of enhanced security and efficiency with the deployment of trusted traveler programs. Airports have also understood that they are uniquely situated to bring interested parties together to chart a course that would result in the successful deployment and operation of these types of programs.

Over the past decade, AAAE and individual airports have worked closely with TSA and the technology community to implement other specific trusted traveler programs, including Registered Traveler (RT). In roughly 1 year, the RT program enrolled more than 250,000 travelers at 24 airports, proving the security and efficiency benefits that adoption of these programs provides. As you may know, CLEAR is actively working to build upon the earlier RT program and is currently in operation at several key airports, including Orlando and Denver with plans to expand to San Francisco and Dallas/Fort Worth later this year. AAAE is encouraged by and supportive of those initiatives and others aimed at facilitating the wide-scale utilization of the trusted traveler approach at airports across the country.

Based on our prior success with trusted traveler initiatives, AAAE has encouraged TSA and CBP to utilize community based, airport-centric enrollment options to facilitate the flow of additional information to the agencies on a significantly expanded number of low-risk passengers for eligibility in the Pre✓™ and Global Entry programs. In addition to providing the volume of passengers necessary for TSA and CBP to realize the operational efficiencies for which the programs are designed, airport specific, public enrollment options will allow airport operators to proactively and directly participate in the risk-based programs that they support.

By playing such a key role, airport operators will also benefit from local implementation of national programs that enhance security. Airport involvement will also bolster the relationship between airport operators and local DHS staff, increase affinity to airports, and assist DHS in reducing the complexity while enhancing the customer experience at passenger screening checkpoints and international arrivals areas. The success of DHS' efforts to advance intelligence driven risk-based security approaches is a top priority for AAAE and its airport leadership.

Airports are confident that in partnership with TSA and CBP they can help facilitate the deployment of robust trusted/known traveler programs that focus on enhanced security above all else in addition to expediting the travel experience. These two pillars are the primary values that air travelers want and that each of you as policymakers rightly will demand. By bringing efficiency back into the Nation's airport screening checkpoints and the international facilitation process, TSA screeners and CBP personnel will be able to better focus their limited resources on the critical task of providing more rigorous screening to individuals about whom we know less than those who use the system the most and have voluntarily submitted background information for extensive vetting and clearance.

Recommendation.—In addition to providing adequate funding to support the Global Entry and Pre✓™ programs in fiscal year 2013, AAAE recommends that the subcommittee and Congress encourage CBP and TSA to continue working with airports to expand these critical trusted traveler programs to additional populations and airport facilities through community-based, airport-centric enrollment approaches.

TSA Efforts To Upgrade Airport Baggage Systems Must Continue With Federal Support

In addition to the wide-scale deployment of trusted traveler programs, efforts to upgrade outdated and inefficiency technology to screen checked baggage for explosives must continue with Federal support if we are to successfully reduce lines and headaches for passengers at the Nation's airports. While good progress has been made over the past decade in upgrading checked baggage systems at airports of all sizes thanks to the good work of this subcommittee and Congress, a number of airports remain in need of improved, in-line baggage screening systems.

Adding to the complexity of the ongoing problem is the fact that much of the explosives detection (EDS) equipment placed in airports to screen checked baggage in the wake of the 9/11 attacks is at or near the end of its useful life, necessitating a costly recapitalization. In an effort to address this issue, the administration in fiscal year 2012 requested and Congress granted to the TSA limited flexibility to utilize for the purchase of EDS equipment funds designated under permanent law for facility modification at airports to accommodate optimal EDS solutions. The fiscal year 2013 budget requests similar authority for TSA.

While airports recognize and support efforts to purchase necessary equipment, we are concerned that resources intended to help make necessary facility modifications at airports to accommodate optimal EDS solutions—the precise purpose of the Aviation Security Capital Fund—are being diverted to pay for equipment. Since terminal modifications are necessary in most instances to install updated EDS equipment, diverting funding from the Aviation Security Capital Fund could stall necessary projects at airports as has been the case in the past. Many airports simply don't have funding readily available for costly terminal modifications and must rely on the Federal Government to meet its obligations in this area.

Recommendation.—Congress should provide TSA with the resources it needs to purchase EDS equipment and reject requests to divert resources from the Aviation Security Capital Fund designated for airport infrastructure upgrades for purposes beyond the scope of current law. As past experiences with technology deployment in airports prove, important projects can become stalled or slow significantly in instances where resources are not available for necessary airport facility upgrades. AAAE further asks that Congress ensure the agency pays for all appropriate costs associated with EDS installation projects, including "bricks and mortar" infrastructure upgrades necessary to accommodate mandated screening systems.

TSA Must Remain Focused on Its Primary Mission of Passenger and Baggage Screening

While not the prime focus of today's hearing, we also wanted to bring to the subcommittee's attention our concern with proposals that continue to emerge to expand TSA's authority beyond its primary mission of passenger and baggage screening. Expanding the agencies reach and responsibilities—particularly to areas already in capable local hands—threatens to dilute already scarce resources.

As you know, airports play a critical role in aviation security, serving as an important partner to TSA in helping the agency meet its core mission of passenger and

baggage screening. The significant changes that have taken place in airports over the past decade with the creation of the TSA and its assumption of all screening duties have been aided dramatically by the work of the airport community, and we will serve as a critical local partner to the agency as it continually modifies its operations, including some of the risk-based security initiatives that are under discussion today.

In addition to partnering with TSA to meet its core mission, airports as public entities provide a critical local layer of security, performing a number of inherently local security-related functions at their facilities, including incident response and management, perimeter security, employee vetting and credentialing, access control, infrastructure and operations planning, and local law enforcement functions. These important duties have long been local responsibilities that have been performed by local authorities in accordance with Federal standards and subject to Federal oversight. Airport operators meet their security-related obligations with a sharp focus on the need to protect public safety, which remains one of their fundamental missions. The professionals who perform these duties at airports are highly trained and have the first responder authorities and responsibilities that we all value immensely.

Recommendation.—From a security and resource perspective, it is critical that inherently local security functions—including incident response and management, perimeter security, employee vetting, and credentialing, access control, infrastructure and operations planning and local law enforcement—remain local with Federal oversight and backed by Federal resources when appropriate. We urge the subcommittee and Congress to reject efforts to federalize local security functions at airports.

Airport Credentialing and Access Control Should Remain With Local Airport Control

One area of particular concern for airport executives that we are compelled to highlight for the subcommittee is an ongoing effort to "harmonize" or "modernize" various aspects of existing transportation worker vetting programs. In the aviation environment, the background check process for workers operates successfully as a Federal/local partnership with the Federal Government holding sole responsibility for security threat assessments and other necessary Government checks for prospective workers and with local airport authorities operating and managing enrollment, credentialing, badging, criminal history background check adjudication, and access control systems in accordance with strict Federal standards.

The current system for aviation ensures the highest level of security by combining the unique local experience, expertise, and knowledge that exists at individual airports with Federal standardization, Federal oversight, and Federal vetting assets. Local involvement provides a critical layer of security and gives airports the operational control they require to ensure that qualified employees receive the credentials they need to work in the airport environment.

In contrast to the long-standing locally controlled credentialing and access control apparatus that exists in the aviation environment, the credentialing/access control system in place in the maritime environment with the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) program is relatively new. Under the TWIC model, the Federal Government or its contractors are responsible for virtually all aspects of the process, including worker enrollment, applicant vetting, credential issuance, and some elements of access control. In our view, the early results of TWIC have been uneven at best despite hundreds of millions of dollars in Federal investments. The existing system in aviation operates at no cost to the Federal Government.

Some have suggested abandoning the successful local systems and processes already in place at airports with badging and access control to expand TSA and the Federal Government's control over more of the process as is the case with TWIC in the maritime environment. Airport executives oppose any move to shift any additional functions in aviation to the Federal Government and believe that such a move would diminish security by reducing or eliminating a critical, extra layer of security that is already in place in airports and absent with the TWIC approach.

Pursuing such an approach would scuttle a successful local/Federal model that has worked well for decades, eliminate local operational control, stymie significant efforts already under way at airports across the country to upgrade and biometrically enable existing airport badging and access control systems, and significantly increase costs to the aviation industry with no demonstrable security benefit.

While the desire to centralize and federalize the process for all transportation worker vetting programs in the name of modernization or harmonization may be understandable from the Federal Government's perspective, airport executives are concerned about Federal intrusion into existing processes that have worked well for decades. Airports are also very concerned about having to help foot the bill for these initiatives—estimated at $633 million through 2025 in appropriations and new fees

as part of the TTAC Infrastructure Modernization (TIM) program—for changes that provide them with no demonstrable security or operational benefit. The current system in aviation operates efficiently and effectively at a fraction of the cost of other transportation vetting programs and at no cost to the Federal Government. We want to ensure that remains the case.

Recommendation.—TSA can and should continue with its efforts to modernize and harmonize its internal vetting programs without the need to expand the Federal Government's responsibilities to include credentialing and access control in the aviation environment. As the subcommittee and Congress consider the TIM program, we urge you to exempt aviation from any new fees or requirements in recognition of the existing, successful, locally controlled credentialing and access control model and the significant investments that have been made locally over the years to those systems. Efforts to federalize any of these processes or functions are unnecessary and wasteful and should be rejected.

CONCLUSION

With Federal resources under severe constraint and with more than 700 million passengers traveling through the U.S. aviation system each year—a number that is expected to grow significantly in the years ahead—it is imperative that TSA remain focused on its primary mission of passenger and baggage screening while pursuing risk-based approaches to enhance security and efficiency. AAAE and airport executives are encouraged by recent efforts to move forward with trusted traveler programs with Global Entry and Pre✓™ and are eager to partner with CBP and TSA to expand those programs to additional populations and airports through community-based, airport-centric approaches.

I appreciated the opportunity to be here today and look forward to any questions you have.

[The G–10 Airports Coalition's facilitation talking points (March 2012) follow:]

ATTACHMENT, G–10 AIRPORTS COALITION—ATLANTA; CHICAGO; DALLAS/FORT WORTH; DENVER; HOUSTON; LOS ANGELES; METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AIRPORTS AUTHORITY; MIAMI; NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY PORT AUTHORITY; PHILADELPHIA; PHOENIX; SAN FRANCISCO; SEATTLE/TACOMA.

Efficient facilitation of internationally arriving travelers at the gateway airports is vital to ensuring the continued growth of the U.S. economy. According to the U.S. Travel Association, improving the inbound air travel experience could add $85 billion in air traveler spending which would support 900,000 jobs nationally. Doubling spending by visitors from Brazil, China, and India specifically could result in an additional $15 billion to the U.S. economy, creating another 105,000 jobs in the travel and tourism industries. The following recommendations to Customs and Border Protection and the Department of State would significantly improve the international traveler experience, encouraging the continued growth of tourism (business, medical, academic, and leisure) to the United States.

CBP ISSUES

Airport Processing Wait Time

Adopt a 30-minute goal of processing all international arriving passengers through Primary Passport Control, which would illustrate the need for additional offers, revised scheduling and queue management, and/or new technology/programs—80 percent of all passengers by end of 2012, 90 percent by end of 2013, 100 percent by end of 2014.

Provide all G–10 airports with daily actual wait times logged per FIS, for greater transparency and communication, as well as the ability to monitor progress toward a goal.

Airport Staffing Levels

Provide additional staffing to provide adequate service to accommodate the growing number of international passengers.

Institute a staffing model/standard to increase efficiency of operations and scheduling at current levels to maximize the number of officers in booths during peak periods, effectively reducing wait times for passengers.

Global Entry Program

Negotiate international reciprocal agreements to increase the number of eligible travelers in the Global Entry (GE) program. The GE program works to reduce overall wait times for arriving passengers by reducing the number of passengers needing to be processed by an officer.

Provide G–10 airports with GE data relative to numbers of enrollments and kiosk usage (broken down by U.S. citizens and foreign nationals) nationally and in our respective airports to gauge the effectiveness of promotional efforts and media outreach.

User Fees

Funds generated ($55 million) from the elimination of the user fee exemption for Mexico, Canada, and the Caribbean should be directly applied to increase resources/staff for airport passenger processing.

Consolidate the CBP user fees, currently at $17.50 for Customs, Immigration, and USDA inspection services per arriving international passenger, into one fee and increase to a level that reflects 50 percent of CBP personnel costs (currently user fees account for 37 percent of CBP's staffing budget of $2.98 billion), with the additional revenue to be used to expand CBP staffing at U.S. international gateway airports.

In-Transit Visa Passengers

Institute a pilot program to provide easier processing for in-transit (international-to-international connecting) passengers at the G–10 airports. This would provide a better service to passengers—guaranteeing connections, and would eliminate these travelers from the general processing queue.

VISA (DEPARTMENT OF STATE) ISSUES

Reduce the time of visa processing for all applicants (especially China and Brazil). Extended wait times (average 50 days in Brazil) hinder the ability for travelers to enter the United States, which results in billions of dollars lost. The average international visitor spends $4,000 in the U.S. per visit.

Implement a pilot to waive in-person interviews for certain low-risk applicants (visa renewals, full-time students, etc.). The elimination of unnecessary interviews would allow officers to put greater focus on high-risk or first-time applicants and ease the burden for legitimate travelers to the United States.

Expansion of the Visa Waiver Program to key target countries such as Brazil, Argentina, and Chile, would significantly increase business and tourism to the United States and deploy consular officers to high-risk/volume countries.

Extend the duration of visas issued to Chinese nationals, from the current 1-year period to a longer period (2, 5, or 10 years). This would significantly reduce the number of travelers re-applying at the limited number of Embassies/Consulates in China. While DOS sites reciprocity and lack of repatriation as reasons, the Secretary of State has the authority under the Immigration and Nationality Act.

Senator LANDRIEU. I think that is a very important point. I mean, as happy as it sounds to designate a special lane for prescreening passengers, it would be very aggravating to be a nonscreened passenger and stand there for 45 minutes watching no one go through the other lane. So I know that, Doug, you are focused on this coordination, but that is very, very important. Thank you for raising it.

Mr. Hendricks.

STATEMENT OF THOMAS L. HENDRICKS, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF SAFETY, SECURITY AND OPERATIONS, AIRLINES FOR AMERICA

Mr. HENDRICKS. Chairman Landrieu, thank you for the opportunity to speak this morning. It is a very critically important topic, and we look forward to sharing our thoughts with you.

As you are aware, A4A represents 90 percent of the traveling passengers and cargo within the United States.

I will try to briefly echo some of the thoughts of some of my fellow panel members and quickly get to our recommendations.

We all here on the panel and members of the subcommittee recognize the importance of air travel within the United States. One of the dominating factors has become hassle for our passengers and not only hassles but the perception of hassles as they see throughput diminished during the screening process.

The President's recent initiative on travel and tourism is a very positive step in our view. He has rightly recognized that the spend of international travelers in the United States has been reduced from 17 percent in 2000 to 11 percent, and we need to turn this around. It is very worrisome. The President's initiative attributed this to increased international competition, changing patterns in global development, and to some degree more stringent security requirements imposed after 9/11.

Having identified these issues that are hindering our competitive position, we need to act promptly and decisively to make travel and tourism a national priority without compromising on safety and security. This should be a centerpiece of a national airline policy.

And we would just like to point out that a strong, vibrant, and healthy airline industry is good for the economy. It is good for our country. Those are good, high-paying jobs, and we need to do everything we can to make this industry successful.

Needed actions. I will get to those quickly. Several basic considerations should guide any new travel and tourism strategy. As has been correctly pointed out, we cannot compromise on security and safety in any way.

Moving to the risk-based screening program that this subcommittee has supported and that Administrator Pistole referred to is the right path forward to help this industry and to improve jobs in the United States.

Second, while impressions may not be accurate, they count mightily in the tourism business. Frustration about obtaining a visa or the length of a line at an airport of entry or a security checkpoint can easily dissuade people from traveling to the United States.

Third and related to the above, many countries have entry procedures that are viewed as less burdensome than ours.

Fourth, other countries are competing hard for our tourists. Some new emerging markets have a cache of newness that, frankly, becomes difficult to compete with sometimes. We need to be on the leading edge of attracting those travelers with their dollars to our communities around this country.

And fifth, globalization is generating larger opportunities for travel throughout the world, and we need to be in a competitive situation and go after those tourists very aggressively.

So it is a demanding environment.

To broaden these opportunities, very briefly I would like to make these recommendations.

We would like to speed the issuance of visas, particularly for high-growth countries such as Brazil, China, and India, and you referred to that, Madam Chairman.

Expand the visa waiver program which we have strong support for.

We are working very closely with Administrator Pistole and his team on the TSA's Pre✓™ program at domestic screening locations.

Recognize on a reciprocal basis other countries' trusted traveler entry programs that mirror CBP's very well received Global Entry program. I have used that program myself. It is very effective and very convenient.

Speed the processing of passengers entering the United States. This will require CBP staffing levels to be at the appropriate level to accommodate greater numbers of international travelers.

Modernize CBP's information technology systems to keep pace with technology as it evolves.

And avoid diverting CBP staff from existing airports of entry and overseas preclearance locations to provide additional personnel for land border crossings or to open new preclearance locations. We are trying to avoid a diversion of these resources so we can focus them most appropriately.

PREPARED STATEMENT

In conclusion, there is a common recognition of the need and benefits of promoting travel and tourism. I understand that you have a great appreciation for that, Madam Chairman. And we look forward to taking any questions you might have.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THOMAS L. HENDRICKS

Chairman Landrieu, Ranking Member Coats and members of the subcommittee, thank you for inviting us to appear at this timely and important hearing.

The members of Airlines for America (A4A) and their affiliates transport more than 90 percent of all U.S. airline passenger and cargo traffic. That traffic is carried on both domestic and international networks. Speaking on behalf of America's airlines, the subject of today's hearing is both timely and critical and we commend the subcommittee for allowing us to provide our views.

OVERVIEW

Whether we are focusing on promoting travel within our country or to our country, one factor predominates: the ease of the traveler's experience. Hassles are the enemies of expanding travel. We must also keep in mind that the perception of a hassling experience can drive travel decisions.

Domestic and international travel is immensely important to our overall economy. It contributed $1.1 trillion to our economy in 2010 and was directly responsible for nearly 7.5 million American jobs. Sixty million international travelers visited our country that year. They spent an estimated $134 billion while they were here and helped generate significant levels of economic activity for those surrounding destination areas.

And while the economic benefits of foreign visitors to the United States are impressive, they are not as great as they could be. The U.S. market share of international travelers' spending worldwide fell from 17 percent in 2000 to a little more than 11 percent in 2010. This is a worrisome decline. President Obama's recent travel-and-tourism Executive order attributed this decline to three factors:

—Increased international competition;

—Changing patterns in global development; and

—To some degree, more stringent security requirements imposed after 2001.

Having identified the issues hindering our competitive position, we need to act promptly and decisively to make travel and tourism promotion a national priority without compromising on security and safety. This should be a centerpiece of a national airline policy. A strong national airline policy would restore and enhance U.S. airline industry viability and enable it to increase air service across the Nation, boost economic growth, expand exports and create more high-paying U.S. jobs.

NEEDED ACTIONS

Several basic considerations should guide a new national travel-and-tourism strategy:

—First, security and safety cannot be compromised in any effort. U.S. Government agencies with border control responsibilities, however, have demonstrated that they have the experience and ability to balance the need to maintain security and simultaneously reduce barriers to travel.

—Second, while impressions may not always be accurate, they count mightily in the travel and tourism business. Frustration about obtaining a visa or the

length of the line at an airport of entry or security checkpoint can easily dissuade foreign travelers from visiting the United States or Americans from taking domestic trips.

—Third and related to the point above, many countries have entry procedures that travelers regard as more predictable and less burdensome than ours. These impressions affect travel decisions.

—Fourth, other countries are competing hard for tourists. They have made the national commitment to attract foreign visitors. In some instances, these destinations have only emerged on a significant scale in the last 5 or 10 years. They thus have the cachet of newness, a potent competitive advantage.

—Fifth, globalization is generating greater disposable incomes—and, therefore, the means to travel—in areas of the world that historically have not been the sources of significant numbers of visitors to the United States. To be realistic, travel to the United States may be viewed in those areas as something less than a priority.

This is a demanding environment. America must sharpen its competitive edge if we are to expand the employment and economic benefits that communities throughout the United States realize from travel and tourism.

To broaden these opportunities, the U.S. Government needs to:

—Speed the issuance of visas, particularly for high-growth countries such as Brazil, China, and India.

—Expand the Visa Waiver Program to additional countries where security assessments support such expansions.

—Expand TSA's Pre✓™ program at domestic passenger screening checkpoints.

—Recognize, on a reciprocal basis, other countries' trusted-traveler entry programs that mirror CBP's very well-received Global Entry program. Consideration should also be given to expanding trusted-traveler programs to specific categories of foreign passengers, such as business travelers, who frequently travel to the United States.

—Speed the processing of passengers entering the United States. This will require more CBP staffing to accommodate greater numbers of international travelers.

—Modernize CBP's information technology systems to better support its passenger processing responsibilities.

—Avoid diverting CBP staff from existing airports of entry and overseas preclearance locations to provide additional personnel for land-border crossings or to open new preclearance locations. Diversion of these limited resources would delay the processing of air travelers arriving at our busiest airports of entry, a result that would tarnish our reputation as a desirable travel destination.

CONCLUSION

There is a common recognition of the need and the benefits of promoting travel and tourism. We look forward to working with the subcommittee to achieve those benefits.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you and I am going to ask you what countries you think serve as the current models when we get to our questions.

Mr. Hacker.

STATEMENT OF STEVEN HACKER, PRESIDENT AND CEO, INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

Mr. HACKER. Thank you, Madam Chairman, for this opportunity to share our concerns with you. I am here representing the nearly 11,000 trade exhibitions that take place in the United States every year. As you would guess, most of them are now heavily dependent upon international visitors.

I can tell you that more Chinese will visit France this year than will visit the United States. We are keeping our best, most lucrative customers from coming to buy American heavy equipment, expensive technology, and management know-how.

What we need is an overarching strategy that combines all of these silos that are involved with travel, safety, tourism. We do not have a national strategy. What we have in place is a patchwork

quilt of fixes. The exchange you had just a few moments ago about Pre✓™ is a perfect example of why we need an overarching strategy to think out these systems and procedures in a very holistic manner.

Knowing I was coming here yesterday, at DFW Airport I counted myself to be the 38th person in line at the priority lane as a Pre✓™-approved passenger. It took me 28 minutes to get to the podium. That totally discredits the program and defeats its entire purpose. It should not be in place until a strategy was developed to implement it effectively for all of the concerns that were expressed.

Our recommendations are fairly simple. We think that a comprehensive visa strategy is essential and that a commission ought to be organized drawing personnel from the Departments of Homeland Security, State, and Commerce, and the private sector. Draw talent out of the travel and trade industries where you have seasoned executives who know how to compete fiercely in a marketplace. Those are essential ingredients that are missing in the current system.

Next, we must expand the visa waiver program. In the years since South Korea was admitted to the program, tourism from that important trading partner has doubled in 1 year.

PREPARED STATEMENT

And then video conferencing. We cannot afford not to test out the validity of video conferencing. When you look at nations that are important to our strategic and economic interests like India, Brazil, and China, the land masses there, the existing infrastructure just simply does not permit those citizens to travel hundreds of miles to a U.S. consular office. We have the technology. We must begin to use it.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STEVEN HACKER

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you information about the concerns of the exhibitions and events industry with respect to visa, entry and homeland security issues. My name is Steven Hacker. I am the president of the International Association of Exhibitions and Events™ (IAEE), a not-for-profit trade association headquartered in Dallas, Texas, that represents the exhibitions and events industry. Our members in the United States produce, service, or host most of the 11,000 trade and public exhibitions that take place each year. These trade events represent about half of the total number that takes place worldwide each year. Many are state-of-the-art events such as the International Consumer Electronics Show, ConAgra/Con Expo, and The National Association of Broadcasters, to name just a few that you may know.

Trade shows and other exhibitions are nothing more than a mirror reflection of the economic circumstances of the industries and avocations that they serve. The events our members produce run the entire spectrum of commerce and society. There are literally events for every industry and interest including events serving the commercial fishing boat industry, wind energy, nuclear medicine, and scrapbooking. It should come as no surprise then that most of the events that take place in the United States are now dependent upon the attendance of international buyers and sellers.

My friend and colleague, Roger Dow, president of the U.S. Travel Association, often refers to the time since 9/11 as the "lost decade" with respect to the global expansion of international travel. While the number of international travelers has increased by 60 million worldwide, the number visiting the United States has remained essentially the same. We are only expecting to increase the number of inter-

national visitors by 3.4 percent this year. To put these numbers in perspective, more Chinese citizens will visit France this year than will visit the United States. Our market share of international visitors has shrunk from 17 percent in 2000 to 12.4 percent in 2011. We have become the "Blackberry" of international travel—hemorrhaging critical market share to our competitors who are thriving at the same time.

The last decade has been 10 years of lost opportunity for the U.S. exhibition industry. Visa and entry hurdles have kept millions of eager foreign buyers and sellers from participating in our events. As a result, they are now buying products and services at exhibitions taking place in Germany, France and China. This is terribly frustrating and is the first of three important ironies I will share with you today.

For the first time in modern history we stand on the brink of being able to finally compete on a level playing field with the colossus of the German trade fair industry whose decades-long and very substantial government subsidies are quickly being eliminated as the result of the continuing European financial crisis. The likely beneficiary of this historic economic opportunity will not be the United States—it will be China.

Just last week, the Chinese Government and the city of Shanghai announced they will soon build the world's largest exhibition facility—containing over 5 million square feet of space—large enough to house two McCormick Place Convention Centers, this Nation's largest, within its walls.

We have struggled for 10 years to convince State and Homeland Security that we must have a comprehensive and secure visa and entry policy—and I want to underscore the singular noun policy because what we now have is nothing more than a patchwork quilt of ad hoc measures that often are at odds with each other and that fall far short of constituting a seamless approach to our commercial and security interests.

The second tragic irony is that our most promising customers who are buyers from the emerging economics of China, Brazil, and India are often the least likely visitors to secure U.S. visas. We are essentially broadcasting to our best prospects, "do not shop here."

In late 2010 we commissioned the highly regarded research firm Oxford Economics to conduct a study that would reveal the economic consequences upon our industry and our Nation stemming from this hodgepodge of poorly conceived and executed visa and entry policies. The key findings of the study are disturbing:

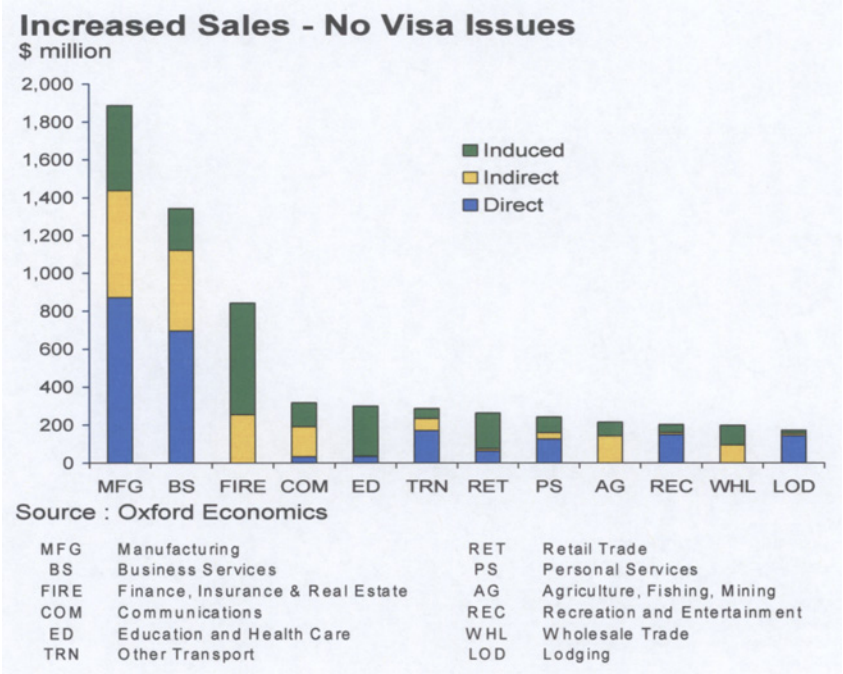
—Visa issues prevented 116,000 international visitors from attending U.S. exhibitions. This includes 78,400 buyers and 37,900 international exhibitors.

These are not buyers who you would find at the Premium Outlet Mall. They want to come here to buy farm and construction heavy machinery costing thousands, and in many cases, millions of dollars apiece; they need aerospace components, automobile parts, technology, and U.S. service industry know-how. Today they are buying what they need in other nations.

—Drop the visa barriers and the U.S. economy would realize increases in business sales from our events alone of about $3 billion. These gains include $1.5 billion in business-to-business trade, one-half billion in registration fees and exhibition space spending, and about $300 million in visitor spending.

—The $3 billion in lost sales would sustain over 17,500 jobs directly and 43,000 jobs overall. It would generate three-quarters of $1 billion in State and Federal taxes.

The third irony revealed by our study is that the industrial sector that would benefit most from the removal of visa barriers is manufacturing—the sector that is most vital to long-term American economic security. The presence of visa obstacles keeps our most promising buyers from engaging with our most vital industry sector. What sense does this make?



We applaud both State and Homeland Security for the recently announced initiatives that will add additional resources in China, Brazil, and elsewhere and that will help bring down waiting times and facilitate more efficient visa processing. However, these latest efforts are just new pieces of the same patchwork quilt and continue to fall far short of constituting a comprehensive, over-arching visa and entry policy that also enhances national security.

Let me hasten to add that the entry experience is as important as the visa issuance policy. It creates a lasting personal impression that can either be very helpful or very harmful to our long-term economic interests. Waiting in an immigration and customs line for 90 minutes only to be greeted by a sullen customs officer is not what other cultures consider hospitality. No surprise, it often reaffirms the conviction that "we are not wanted in the United States."

I referred earlier to ad hoc policies that are often at odds with each other. Here is an example. The newly launched Trusted Traveler program is something we have advocated repeatedly since 9/11. In most airport installations it is flawed. Trusted Travelers who expect to "fly through" TSA security screening must first wait the typical 20 minutes or more in the same lanes as all other travelers. This completely defeats the purpose of the program. The system needs to stipulate that there must be a lane dedicated exclusively to Trusted Travelers so they may reach the TSA podium swiftly.

To conclude here is what we recommend:

—We must develop a singular and comprehensive visa and entry policy that is designed from the ground up. It must support the mutual goals of enhancing our economic competitiveness and national security. We believe it would be beneficial to create a U.S. visa commission consisting of State and Homeland Security personnel and executives from the private sector for this purpose. Many of the flaws in the current patchwork would never be permitted if we ran visa and entry processing as a commercial enterprise. We need to streamline and modernize these systems if we hope to become globally competitive. Executives who have expertise in travel and the movement of people are resources that must be engaged to ensure that our Federal agencies can redesign the system in the most efficient and effective manner.

—Ample evidence exists that many visa rejections appear to be illogical, capricious, and unfounded. While we believe that ultimate authority for the approval or denial of applicants must continue to reside with consular officials at posts

abroad, we also believe that it would be very helpful to adopt uniform guidelines that establish more definitive parameters for the circumstances that might bear upon the final decision to approve or deny an application.

—The Visa Waiver Program must be expanded quickly to include our most important potential trading partners like Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and Poland. There are, of course, many others. The benefits are enormous and will materially reduce the stress on our visa and entry support systems. Expanding the Visa Waiver Program will free desperately needed resources that can be applied elsewhere in the system. The addition, for example, of the Republic of Korea to the program last year has already resulted in the doubling of visitors from that nation to the United States.

—Allowing more international visitors to enter the United States is not a zero sum game. Quite the contrary. It will yield millions and millions of dollars in new fees and taxes to stimulate new jobs and put American commerce in a far more competitive position globally than we have been for the past decade.

Thank you again for allowing me this opportunity to visit with you.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you, Mr. Hacker.

And that is actually why I insisted on you being part of this panel, I think, because we have had so much focus on tourism, and that is extremely important and it was a subject of part of my opening. I do sense, as a community that also attracts large trade shows—I am aware of these trade shows. Lots of them happen in New Orleans. It is virtually impossible for our businesses to compete in the world that we have created without really pushing the envelope on some of this. And I agree with you. While we have made some progress, we have a great deal of progress to go. And I think your call for an overall strategy is right on.

Ms. Nelson and then we will go to questions.

STATEMENT OF SARA NELSON, INTERNATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT, ASSOCIATION OF FLIGHT ATTENDANTS–CWA

Ms. NELSON. Thank you, Chairwoman Landrieu, for giving us the opportunity to testify today.

Our president, Veda Shook, regrets that she was unable to attend and sends her best wishes.

I am here representing the world's largest flight attendant union, the Association of Flight Attendants–CWA, representing 60,000 flight attendants at 22 different airlines. Flight attendants, as first responders in the aircraft cabin, have a unique perspective on security, and we very much appreciate your attention to these issues.

When airport security was federalized, security improved immediately. On September 11, 2001, I was based in Boston as a United Airlines flight attendants, and I had worked United Airlines flight 175 frequently. It could have been me on that fateful day, but instead it was people I knew and worked with, including my good friends, Emmy King, Michael Tureau, Robert Fangman, Amy Jerrod, and the 21 other flight attendants who were my colleagues.

I remember airport security prior to September 11 and the faces of the screeners who worked at the checkpoint for terminal C at Logan. The terrorists would have passed through this checkpoint to board United flight 175. I remember the screeners' faces because they were all the time, 7 days a week, all hours of the day. I remember their accents and their sweet but tired smiles. I remember their efforts to work long hours for the lowest bidding security company so that they could provide for their own families.

I lost my friends that day and my profession was redefined and our world changed forever. And I often wonder how those hard-

working security personnel have coped with their part in failing to stop the most fatal attack on U.S. soil. Do they know they were set up to fail?

Federalizing airport screening has been a success, improving the security of air travel. Flight attendants are the last line of defense in aviation security. We depend upon a regulated Federal security system, and we commend TSA Administrator Pistole's efforts to limit privatization of security at additional airports and we oppose recent actions of Congress to attempt to force the Administrator to allow more privatization.

AFA expects flight attendants to be included in the Known Crewmember program as a part of the larger risk-based initiatives that focus on security while making screening more convenient. TSA initiated this alternate screening first for pilots in 2011. The Association of Professional Flight Attendants representing American Airlines flight attendants and the Transport Workers Union Local 556 representing Southwest flight attendants join the 60,000 flight attendants in AFA in supporting inclusion of flight attendants in Known Crewmember.

The 9/11 Commission Act provided direction that all crew members, flight attendants included, take part in expedited, alternate screening. Full implementation with all crew members would create a more efficient travel experience as it reduces passenger screening congestion. Flight attendants have access to the flight deck. We are subject to the same 10-year background checks as pilots, and like pilots, we carry a certificate issued by FAA. We are charged with protecting the flight deck at all costs, including the loss of our own lives.

The Air Line Pilots Association and A4A have both requested that TSA expand the program to include flight attendants in the future, and the time is now. So we encourage the subcommittee to request a report from TSA establishing milestones for including flight attendants in the program as mandated by the 9/11 Commission Act.

To improve efficiency and security during screening and boarding, TSA should issue regulations to limit carry-on baggage: One bag, plus one personal item. According to the Common Strategy Security Guidance, flight attendants are to observe passengers during the boarding process to watch for anything suspicious. This critical final layer of pre-flight security is severely hampered by the distraction of carry-on bag chaos.

Current carry-on rules were established more than two decades ago, and each carrier has its own program. Global alliances and code share agreements can make this very confusing for passengers. For example, passengers buying a ticket on Delta's Web site from Roanoke, Virginia to Paris, France, may never step foot on a Delta airplane as they actually fly on ExpressJet to Atlanta and Air France to Paris.

A standard baggage policy enforced by TSA that limits size and number of carry-on bags will make screening more efficient at security checkpoints and allow flight attendants to more effectively observe the cabin for possible security threats.

In conclusion, TSA should institute and enforce a standardized carry-on baggage policy. Security and the screening workforce must

remain federalized through TSA, and flight attendant inclusion in the Known Crewmember program should be expedited.

We look forward to continuing our working relationship with you and with this subcommittee and making progress on these important issues. And we look forward to working with Administrator Pistole to implement these important policies.

And thank you again so much for the opportunity to testify today.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SARA NELSON

Thank you, Chairwoman Landrieu for giving us the opportunity to testify today. Our president, Veda Shook, regrets that she was unable to be here today and sends her best wishes and greetings. My name is Sara Nelson, and I am the international vice president of the Association of Flight Attendants–Communication Workers of America (AFA), AFL–CIO. AFA represents nearly 60,000 flight attendants at 22 different airlines and is the world's largest flight attendant union. We appreciate having the opportunity to testify at today's hearing on "Balancing Prosperity and Security: Challenges for U.S. Air Travel in a 21st Century Global Economy."

In the 10 years since the 9/11 attacks, flight attendants have been assigned increased responsibilities for ensuring safety, health, and security in the cabin. We receive training in fire control, first aid, aircraft evacuation, and emergency procedures, and are responsible for protecting the flight deck and cabin from an attack. Flight attendants play a key role in the security of passengers on the aircraft and are required to be on passenger flights.

Flight attendants, as the first responders in the aircraft cabin, have a unique perspective on a number of the programs of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). We are pleased to have a seat here today to share our views on how the Federal TSA workforce, expedited screening for all crewmembers, and establishing a standardized carry-on baggage policy can enhance safety and security while improving convenience and efficiency at our Nation's airports.

TSA WORKFORCE

When airport security was federalized, security improved immediately. On September 11, 2001, I was based in Boston as a United Airlines flight attendant. I remember airport security prior to September 11. I remember the faces of the screeners who worked the check point for terminal C at Logan. The terrorist would have passed through this check point to board United flight 175. I remember the screener's faces because they were there all the time, 7 days a week, all hours of the day. I remember their accents and their sweet, but tired smiles. I remember their efforts to work the long hours for the lowest bidding security company just so that they could provide for their own families. I lost 25 of my flying partners that day, my profession was redefined and our world changed forever, and I often wonder how those hard-working security personnel have coped with their part in failing to stop the most fatal attack on U.S. soil. Do they understand they were set up to fail?

We commend TSA Administrator Pistole's efforts to date to limit privatization of security at additional airports and we oppose recent actions of this Congress to attempt to force the Administrator to allow more privatization. Federalizing airport screening has been a success, improving the security of air travel. Flight attendants and passengers are safer today because of it. Flight attendants are the last line of defense in aviation security. My colleagues and I depend on TSA workers to keep our jobs safe. We depend upon a regulated security system that meets the requirements of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (9/11 Commission Act), Public Law 110–53.

Effective passenger and baggage screening is a vital part of our layered defense against terrorism in the skies. It is also a difficult job with massive responsibility.

There is a growing drum beat demanding a return to the old system where security checkpoints were contracted out to the lowest bidder. To return to a bottom-line driven system that puts security second to profits borders on reckless and is an unjustified regression from TSA's successful mission to protect the skies.

The flight attendants of this country act as first responders every day of the year and our lives depend on the integrity of each layer of security in the airport and on the aircraft. TSA must have the funding to give screeners the staffing, support and training they need to do their jobs to help keep our skies safe and secure.

SECURITY SCREENING

For more than 5 years AFA has pressed for alternative screening for flight attendants that would accurately reflect our credentials as pre-screened safety professionals. Our advocacy on alternative screening is all the more important and relevant as the TSA moves to implement risk-based passenger security screening.

Flight attendants are subject to the same level of screening and background checks as pilots, with the exception of those pilots participating in the Federal Flight Deck Officer (FFDO) program. Flight attendants are an integral part of the crew and the purpose of our jobs is to handle in-flight safety and security. Yet flight attendants are not included in the same alternative screening as our pilots. TSA has stated that a similar screening process is contemplated for flight attendants, but concrete dates or milestones to start this inclusion process have yet to be announced.

The 9/11 Commission Act requires the Department of Homeland Security to implement an alternate security screening system for sterile area access control within commercial service airports. The system was to be used by all crewmembers. The subject is extremely relevant for today's hearing. First, an alternate security screening process for crewmembers contributes to a more efficient travel experience as it reduces passenger-screening congestion. Second, the system recommended was included in a report that focused on creating a more secure aviation system.

In May 2009, TSA announced a test program, CrewPASS at three airports. Participation at these airports was voluntary but plans to expand the system were underway until November 2010. New screening technologies, advanced imaging technology (AIT) scanning machines, were deployed in over 68 airport locations with TSA implemented enhanced screening procedures at security check points. Any person, who did not want to utilize the new AIT machines, and set off the alarm at a walk-through metal detector, would be subjected to an "enhanced" pat-down.

The Thanksgiving weekend roll-out was done without consultation of the industry or aviation workers on the front lines of security. A Memphis pilot refused to submit to the new screening procedures and was subsequently denied access to his aircraft. Faced with a public outcry, TSA announced that pilots would be exempt from the new screening procedures and TSA would implement an expedited screening program based upon the CrewPASS test program, utilizing the Cockpit Access Security System (CASS) database. Since the CASS database was designed to verify the identity and employment status of pilots allowing them access to the jumpseats of airplanes belonging to companies other than their own—it was to be limited to pilots only.

On November 19, 2010, AFA held a meeting with Administrator Pistole to discuss the concerns of our members about these procedures and to reiterate our call for TSA to implement CrewPASS that would provide flight attendants with a non-invasive method of screening. At this meeting TSA said that pilots and flight attendants would be subjected to the exact same screening procedures and the Administrator agreed to work with AFA on a range of security-related issues, including screening procedures.

On August 11, 2011, TSA started another expedited alternate screening program similar to CrewPASS called Known Crewmember (KCM). TSA, working in cooperation with the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) and Airlines for America (A4A), rolled out the program at a few U.S. airports and it was available for pilots from specific airlines only. Flight attendants, with the same background checks as their pilot crewmember counterparts, have not been included in the program.

While TSA continues to consider when or if to include flight attendant participation in the Known Crewmember program, the agency has announced pilots from additional airlines are scheduled to be included in addition to implementing other alternative screening initiatives for frequent travelers and Active Duty servicemembers. AFA supports risk-based screening initiatives designed to make the screening process more convenient without sacrificing security. Flight attendants should be recognized for the work we do and for the service and safety we provide, and permitted to participate in alternative screening. In terms of supporting security, efficiency of the program and convenience for travelers currently sharing screening lines with flight attendants, TSA should move quickly to include all crewmembers in KCM. We encourage this subcommittee to request a report from TSA establishing milestones for including flight attendants in the program as mandated by the 9/11 Commission Act.

Flight attendants are first responders and since 9/11 we have also taken on the role as the last line of defense for aviation security. Flight attendants routinely identify and manage threat levels, use our training to de-escalate threats, and provide direction to helper passengers to assist in restraining assailants. We are

charged with protecting the cockpit at all costs, including the loss of our own lives. Security doesn't just happen; over 100,000 flight attendants working in U.S. aviation system fill our role to make sure our skies are safe.

Flight attendants have access to the flight deck and we are subject to the same 10-year background checks as pilots. Like pilots, we carry a certificate issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The 9/11 Commission Act provided direction that all crewmembers, flight attendants included, take part in expedited, alternate screening. Other stakeholders are in agreement: ALPA and A4A have both requested that the TSA expand the program to include flight attendants in the future.

The time is now. Passengers are being invited to opt-in to expedited security screening programs simply because they log a certain number of miles on U.S. carriers. The Nation's certified flight attendants, serving as the last line of defense, surely meet the requirements of the Known Crewmember program.

CARRY-ON BAGGAGE LIMITATIONS

To improve efficiency and security during the screening process and during the boarding process, TSA should issue regulations that would set a standard limit on carry-on baggage permitted to pass through security checkpoints. TSA has introduced passengers to the concept of 3–1–1 regarding liquids, aerosols, and gels. That is, 3 ounces in a 1-quart clear plastic, zip-top bag; one bag per passenger placed in a screening bin and fit through a template on the X-ray conveyor belt. We call upon the TSA to add two numbers to this equation 1+1: One bag, plus one personal item. [1]

Reducing the size and number of carry-on bags would ultimately enhance security screening by reducing the number of bags that need to be screened at airport checkpoints.

Current guidelines for carry-on bags were established more than two decades ago when air travel was much different than today. Each carrier had to have an individual program to control the weight, size, and number of carry-on bags. This created a maze of varying programs making it difficult and confusing for passengers. With the formation of global alliances and code share agreements individual program philosophies add to the confusion since alliance members sell seats on their partners' routes. A ticket purchased from one carrier may be subject to the carry-on bag rules of another.

The concept of limiting the size, type, and amount of carry-on baggage in relation to improving security is nothing new and was recommended by the FAA Aviation Security Advisory Committee in 1996. Similarly, after 9/11, the FAA issued guidance to carriers to limit passengers to one carry-on bag and one personal bag (such as a purse or briefcase). This restriction is loosely enforced.

AFA has filed two petitions for rulemaking requesting the FAA to enhance their carry-on baggage rule, citing incidents involving carry-on bags that range from disruption in the cabin, delays in boarding and deplaning, physical and verbal abuses toward flight attendants and passengers, and injuries and impediments to speedy evacuations. Despite these two requests for rulemaking the FAA has failed to establish a specific requirement regarding size and number of carry-on bags allowed.

According to the Common Strategy security guidance, flight attendants are to observe passengers during the boarding process to watch for anything suspicious. Prior to takeoff, flight attendants can ask the captain to subject a suspicious passenger to additional security scrutiny. The ability of flight attendants to provide this critical final layer of pre-flight security is being severely hampered by the distraction created with carry-on baggage chaos. Frequent flyers see it almost every flight: flight attendants are forced to manage excessive numbers of oversized carry-on bags in limited overhead bin space and removing baggage that doesn't fit.

Limiting the size and number of carry-on baggage would create a uniform, enforceable rule across the industry, and enhance security in the process. It will allow for more efficient screening at the checkpoint and also improve the ability of flight attendants to more effectively observe passengers for possible security threats. The TSA could make travel more secure and convenient for passengers by issuing a standardized policy on carry-on bags and limiting the size and number of carry-on bags allowed to be screened at an airport check point.

In conclusion, AFA believes there are areas where improvements could be made by the TSA to foster efficiency while enhancing security. Security must remain federalized through TSA, flight attendant inclusion in the Known Crewmember pro-

[1] Exclusions: any regulations established by the FAA or TSA should not apply to child safety seat nor a child passenger, assistive devices for disabled passengers, musical instruments, outer garments or to working crewmembers in uniform.

gram should be expedited and the TSA should institute and enforce a standardized carry-on baggage policy. We look forward to continuing our working relationship with this subcommittee and the chairwoman to make progress on these important issues. And, we look forward to working with Administrator Pistole to implement these important changes. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today.

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you, Ms. Nelson. And I really appreciate the airline industry that is represented here staying focused on the subject at hand and not diverting too much into this baggage charge issue. But I do want to raise this.

With baggage charges anywhere from $25 to $50—I think it could even go up to $100 depending on—it is really dissuading people from putting their bags through the regular process and stuffing everything into extra large carry-ons which is slowing down the boarding process, as you heard, making it more difficult for the flight attendants to actually have eyes on the cabin with so much chaos.

So I do not want to bring that up in too much detail, but I am going to follow up with some additional hearings on the whole baggage charge, et cetera, at the appropriate time.

But let me ask the airports. Do not even mention TSA; do not mention the State Department; and do not mention Customs. I would like to know what the airports themselves are doing to improve the experience for travelers. I know your budgets are limited. Your capital budgets are limited. We took a long time to expedite the reauthorization of the Federal aviation bill.

But what, Mr. Barclay, are airports doing themselves? Could you mention two or three specific things to improve the experience of travelers, maybe what one or two of your biggest concerns are or your frustrations? Either you do not have as much say-so over the airlines themselves or your working relationship with TSA at some places is not what it should be or Customs. Could you mention two specific things that are your doing and maybe two specific frustrations that airports are doing?

Mr. BARCLAY. Right. The airports, as you know, are landlords. They are like the shopping center owner and then the direct line of interaction with the customer are the tenants, whether it is the airlines or the shops. TSA is a tenant at the checkpoint. But airports are owned by local governments and controlled by government entities headed by people who care mostly about their volunteers and they care about—if you serve on the board of an airport, what you care about is the passenger experience at that airport.

So airports try to find ways. They hire ambassadors. As was mentioned earlier, often they will hire ambassadors with multiple language capabilities to help folks that may not speak English. They try to find ways to insert themselves where it is not interfering with the commerce of the direct relationship between a passenger and an airline or between someone trying to get vetted and TSA. So our role is to provide the facilities and provide comfortable enough facilities, but it is not the direct interface with the passenger.

Senator LANDRIEU. I think this is a very interesting point and it may just be my perspective as a former local elected official just on behalf of my constituents. I think when somebody shows up to an airport, they actually think that the airport is in charge of something. Like they go to the Atlanta airport, they think that the

Atlanta airport is in charge of something. It is becoming apparent to me that the Atlanta airport is virtually in charge of nothing. And so the passengers wander from airline to airline with all different rules and regulations. TSA is in charge of this. You cannot get a glass of water because of this.

I mean, I really think, getting back to what Mr. Hacker said, sort of an overall look, a look afresh, at the way that just a regular passenger views, that they are in this huge building that looks someone should be in charge, but no one is really in charge of the whole picture. It is either an airline issue or a TSA issue or a food service issue, et cetera, et cetera. And I think this should be an issue for mayors that are trying to promote their cities and for Governors that are all about creating jobs and opportunity.

And I am going to do what I can as chair of this subcommittee to connect mayors, Governors, airports, and this large group because the bottom line is jobs and opportunity and economic vitality for this country. This is about business. This is the way business is done now. And I am not seeing as much progress on this as I would like to see.

What is your one biggest frustration as an airport director? And let me ask you this. Do you ever give awards to airports that do a really good job of this just regularly? And who won your award last year?

Mr. BARCLAY. We do not give out awards, but there are a number of awards aimed at trying to incentivize people to win the awards. We can get the subcommittee a list of some of those.

Senator LANDRIEU. Get that list to me, if you would.

[The information follows:]

LETTER FROM THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF AIRPORT EXECUTIVES

JANUARY 15, 2013.

Hon. MARY LANDRIEU,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Homeland Security,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN LANDRIEU: I am writing as a follow up to the March 21, 2012, subcommittee hearing on challenges for U.S. air travel and a question you posed to me during the hearing regarding airport customer service awards. As I noted to your initial inquiry, AAAE does not give out specific awards in this area, but there are other notable efforts aimed at fostering enhanced customer service at the Nation's airports.

Perhaps the most prominent of these is the J.D. Power and Associates North American Airport Satisfaction Study. The study, which has received wide-spread national and local media attention, provides an important measure of customer satisfaction with the passenger experience at individual airports, including accessibility; baggage claim; check-in/baggage check process; terminal facilities; security check; and food and retail services. The study has been helpful in showcasing successful customer service initiatives by airports and their airline and Government partners. It has also been helpful, frankly, in providing useful feedback on areas in which improvements are needed.

As I tried to make clear in response to your questions and in my testimony before the subcommittee, airports as public entities view passenger convenience, safety, and security as their primary responsibilities and work diligently with their tenants and the Federal Government to make constant improvements in these areas. In addition to reviewing feedback from national surveys, many individual airports routinely query their passengers—both formally and informally—to assess where they are in terms of customer service so that improvements can be made when necessary.

Airport executives share your concern about the challenges that exist at the Nation's airports as all parties who operate at these facilities seek to find the right balance between security and convenience. There are clearly many areas in which

improvements can be made, and airport executives are committed to working with our Government and industry partners to achieve that goal.

We sincerely appreciate the leadership role you have taken through your work on the subcommittee to highlight the importance of improving the experience of air travelers both domestically and internationally, and we look forward to working with you toward that end in the year ahead.

Sincerely,

CHARLES BARCLAY,
President.

Mr. BARCLAY. I mean, the frustration is often exactly what you are saying. Airports have a big job. Adding a fifth runway at Atlanta which affects the entire system because delays were rippling around the system, the politics and the difficulty and the cost of adding a multi-billion dollar, multi-year project was enormous. And that is the airport's job, making sure those facilities are there. But it does not feel as fulfilling as it should if you have got a lot of mad passengers who are waiting too long in a security line somewhere and you are the local government official in charge of that airport.

Senator LANDRIEU. And I would like to ask, while TSA is here, when Delta Airlines adds 10 more flights into an airport between the hours of 10 a.m. and 12 on a morning, how is that communicated to TSA and how quickly can they change their staffing assignments? Who wants to take that question?

Mr. HENDRICKS. Madam Chairman, I would be happy to answer that. Thank you.

I am a retired airline captain. I worked at Delta Airlines for many years.

I can assure you that the station manager in Atlanta—his job is to run the experience for all of those Delta passengers in Atlanta, and he is very much engaged with his partners at the local airport authority, with the local TSA officials. And whenever the network changes, those communications take place at the local level because we have to make sure that we have got enough supporting capability to match the capacity that may be changing at that particular airport.

So I am comfortable that United in Chicago, American in Dallas and Miami, Delta in Atlanta and Minneapolis—they are communicating very aggressively with their airport authorities and with local TSA agents and with CBP as well to ensure that the traveling experience is as good as it possibly can be because they want to reduce the amount of frustrations that our passengers have from when they walk in the door at the airport to when they exit the curb and go to their destination.

Senator LANDRIEU. Mr. Hacker, you testified that flaws in our visa processing system are costing the U.S. convention industry $3 billion in sales, 43,000 jobs, and $750 million in State and Federal taxes every year. Those are big numbers. You also made the comment that exhibition attendees are not shopping at outlet malls. They are shopping for heavy machinery, aerospace, automobile parts, advanced technology, and professional services.

What are some of the highest profile global trade exhibitions that take place in the United States just to give a little bit more dimension to what we are trying to raise here?

Mr. HACKER. Let me give you two illustrations. The first I think most of us are familiar with because of the intense media coverage

every January, and that is the international consumer electronics show in Las Vegas. This year it drew 150,000 attendees from literally all over the world. It is the principal trade event. And billions of dollars change hands at an event like that.

I can tell you that about 40,000 buyers from overseas, principally from Asia, did not attend the event because they could not get visas.

One of the points I was not able to make earlier was we really do need to adopt guidelines at the State Department that define what are the parameters for the approval or the denial of a visa application. We have ample evidence that many of those rejections are capricious, they are illogical, and they are unjustified. I would be happy to provide you with specific information about that.

But it is incalculable when a delegation from India that wants to come to another major event like Conexpo-Con/Agg, the largest footprint, 2.8 million square feet of space every 3 years in the United States—this is where you would go to buy John Deere mining equipment, Caterpillar earth moving equipment. A delegation from India, 35 buyers, was rejected. So they went to Germany and they bought Polish tractors and earth moving gear.

Now, the losses to John Deere and Caterpillar measure in the billions of dollars right there in that transaction alone, to say nothing of the jobs and the taxation that was lost.

So this is such a frustrating decade that we have endured since 9/11. And much credit to TSA, DHS, and the State Department. We have made progress, but not nearly enough. Not nearly enough.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE QUESTIONS

Senator LANDRIEU. I think that is a good place to close this hearing.

I am going to carefully review this testimony. It will stay open for 1 week for any additional submissions.

[The following questions were not asked at the hearing, but were submitted to the nondepartmental witnesses for response subsequent to the hearing:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO ROGER S. DOW

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARY L. LANDRIEU

Question. Mr. Dow, now that the President has issued an Executive order on travel and tourism and the State Department has instituted needed reforms, is there still a need for legislation to improve the visa process?

Answer. The President's Executive order was an enormous step forward toward encouraging overseas travel to the United States. The administrative directives to re-deploy consular personnel more strategically and to reduce wait times in key markets will address the inefficiencies that currently serve as a self-imposed barrier to international travelers to the United States for both business and leisure. These steps will certainly help alleviate the unproductive delay and confusion in the visa application process that undermine our competitiveness in the international travel marketplace. But this progress will be illusory if we cannot sustain it over the long term. The only way to ensure such structural change is to codify these welcome reforms in statute. In particular, we urge Senators to support S. 2233, the JOLT Act.

Question. Mr. Dow, would you elaborate on why Brazil, China, and India are such important travel markets for the United States? Why should we focus on them right now?

Answer. When it comes to attracting visitors from these dynamic markets, the United States lags behind our international competitors, especially in Western Europe.

Between 2000 and 2010, the number of long-haul arrivals to the United States from Brazil, China, and India rose by about 1.4 million. During that same period, arrivals increased by more than 3 million to Western Europe. In 2010, the United States welcomed just 2.6 million travelers from these countries, while more than 6 million Brazilian, Chinese, and Indian travelers visited Western Europe.

In 2010, the United States claimed 29 percent of the Brazilian long-haul market, compared to 51 percent for Western Europe. For China, the United States held just 13 percent of the market, a third of Western Europe's share. And in India, only 11 percent of long-haul outbound travel comes to the United States, compared to more than 26 percent for Western Europe.

In order to compete effectively in the global travel market, the United States must set a national goal of keeping pace with our competitors in Western Europe and matching their current market share in attracting visitors from Brazil, China, and India by 2015.

Question. Mr. Dow, you have recommended that the State Department pilot the use of visa videoconferencing to conduct visa interviews remotely. Why is there a need for this and do you know of a concern about security in carrying it out?

Answer. For millions of overseas tourists and business travelers seeking admission to the United States, the lack of accessibility to our consular offices is a significant disincentive to even applying for a visa. In critical travel markets like China, India, and Brazil, visa applicants who do not live in a city with a U.S. consulate, are forced to travel—at times—thousands of miles, at great expense and inconvenience, for the required personal interview that lasts less than 5 minutes. We could remove this obstacle by authorizing the use of secure remote videoconference technology for applicant interviews. This technology, used routinely for secure communication by nearly every Federal agency including the State Department, would streamline the process without in any way compromising security. Indeed, the fact that the videotaped interview could be reviewed later could actually enhance security. It is important to note that any applicant whose videotaped interview yielded increased suspicion could still be required to appear in person. For the vast majority of interviews that proceed successfully, this technology would encourage more applicants for legitimate business and leisure travel to the United States; minimize the daunting expense and logistics of travel to the "nearest" consulate; economize on the time of consular officials; and, most important, help restore the competitiveness of the United States in the global travel market.

Question. Mr. Dow, if the visa reforms that are being implemented help to drive up international travel, what impact will that have on U.S. airports?

Answer. As international travel to the United States grows through much needed visa reforms, the flow of traffic through U.S. airports will significantly increase. This will impact all phases of airport operations but could have serious impacts particularly on the entry process. Several U.S. airports are already facing long wait times at U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) primary inspection areas, of up to 3 hours, as a result of inadequate officer staffing and non-optimal officer schedule management. The U.S. Travel Association supports entry reforms that will reduce primary inspection wait times and better facilitate the increased flow of passengers through immigration processing.

U.S. Travel supports the adoption of a 20-minute baseline standard for the clearance of each international arriving passenger in the primary inspection area. We believe this will require CBP to develop and implement an automated staffing model to maximize CBP limited resources. In addition, it is likely that new personnel will be needed. In order to determine the appropriate staffing levels, we encourage CBP to share the findings of its recent Workload Staffing Model report with the Committee and for the subcommittee to include adequate funding in the fiscal year 2013 DHS Appropriations bill to fund our Nation's international airports appropriately.

We also encourage CBP to expand the use of technology in passenger processing to enhance security and free up valuable officer resources to focus on the most critical threats. CBP should increase the number of nations participating in the Global Entry program starting with South Korea, Australia, Japan, the United Kingdom, and Singapore. In addition, we urge CBP to implement a more user-friendly application process through a simplified online application and additional interview locations in order to conduct applicant interviews within 6 weeks of conditional approval.

In the current budgetary environment, we strongly believe that any funds acquired through the taxation of travelers should be reinvested to enhance travel facilitation. As a result, it is only fitting that the additional funding of $110 million resulting from the elimination of the COBRA fee exemption for Canadian, Mexican, and Caribbean travelers should be used for passenger facilitation operations at air and sea ports of entry.

Question. In your testimony, you state that travelers would take two to three more trips per year if security hassles were improved. Besides the airlines, what other businesses are impacted by the inefficient screening process? Do all U.S. Travel Association members see this as a problem?

Answer. For the travel community—which supports rural and urban communities alike—inefficiencies in the aviation security screening process impose a staggering cost on all types of businesses.

A 2008 survey of air travelers who took one or more flights in the previous year found that one in four respondents (28 percent) avoided at least one trip because of the hassles of air travel, which include aviation congestion and passenger screening. That loss of travel translates into a $26.5 billion loss to the U.S. economy, including $9.4 billion to airlines, $5.6 billion to hotels, $3.1 billion to restaurants and $4.2 billion in Federal, State, and local tax revenue. These types of economic losses also trickle out to food suppliers, retail businesses, car rental and bus companies, and travel agents, just to name a few.

U.S. Travel members from all subsectors of the travel industry identify the inefficient screening process as a problem. From convention planners, to travel agents, to attractions and more, U.S. Travel members frequently express frustrations that their customers are deterred from traveling because of the hassles in security screening.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO CHARLES M. BARCLAY

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARY L. LANDRIEU

Question. Could you walk us through the role you think airports can play in facilitating the expansion of TSA's PreCheck (Pre✓™) program?

Answer. Airports have long recognized the potential value of trusted traveler programs in terms of enhanced security and efficiency and are eager to partner with TSA to facilitate expansion of the Pre✓™ program to additional airports and populations—something that is absolutely critical if the program is to achieve its full promise.

Airports serve as local partners to the TSA with a common mission of providing the highest levels of security for the traveling public. For more than a decade, airports have worked directly and collaboratively with TSA and understand fully Federal requirements and agency security imperatives. Airports support the Federal security mission while ensuring that the needs of airport tenants and the traveling public in the communities they serve are also well understood and attended to. Airports, in other words, are uniquely situated to ensure that Pre✓™ and other trusted traveler approaches are undertaken in a way that best meets the needs of all interested parties.

Moving forward, airport executives believe the Pre✓™ program must be expanded to accommodate as many additional, qualified travelers as possible through a community based, airport-centric approach that allows vastly larger populations of travelers to enroll and participate in Pre✓™ on an airport-by-airport basis and become trusted through Government-approved vetting protocols. While airline-based programs and Global Entry—the only current avenues for enrolling qualified participants—are a good start, additional efforts will be needed to accommodate a broader range of qualified travelers.

Specifically, airports can play an active role in the enrollment of individuals into Pre✓™, Global Entry, and other trusted traveler programs. All commercial service airports have an established process in place for collecting and submitting to the Federal Government biographic and biometric information for employees at airports who are required to undergo mandated criminal history and security threat assessment background checks. This process could be expanded to accommodate enrollment in Pre✓™ and other trusted traveler programs. We also believe there are other viable solutions to gathering the information required by the Government for program participation.

AAAE has played an active role in the collection of biographic and biometric information for aviation workers subject to Government background checks for more than a decade, and its Transportation Security Clearinghouse has successfully processed nearly 10 million background check records during that time. The association and the airport community stand ready to do even more to leverage this experience and expertise to quickly and effectively move today's largely airline-centric program in operation at merely a handful of airports to one that is operational for large numbers of travelers at airport facilities across the country.

In our view, the experiences with the Registered Traveler (RT) program offer an important roadmap on how to proceed. As you may recall, 250,000 people were enrolled in RT in a relatively short time and the program quickly became operational and interoperable at 22 airports across the country. Although the initial business model with Registered Traveler ultimately proved unsustainable, the effort was incredibly successful operationally and should serve as a model for moving forward to grow the Pre✓™ program efficiently and effectively utilizing airport knowledge and expertise.

Question. TSA plans to have Pre✓™ security lanes at 35 airports by the end of 2012. Do you have concerns that wait times for non Pre✓™ security lanes will increase?

Answer. Airports are very concerned about the potential for growing wait times in non-Pre✓™ security lanes and believe that every effort must be made to implement a community-based, airport-centric approach to ensure that adequate numbers of eligible individuals participate in the Pre✓™ program.

For the TSA Pre✓™ program to be a viable, long-term solution to increasing efficiency and security at airport checkpoints, it must grow quickly to include populations beyond elite frequent fliers, Global Entry program participants, and other select groups. With TSA contemplating the dedication of both staffing and screening lanes to the program, a failure to enroll a sufficient number of participants could result in the underutilization of scarce TSA screening resources and exacerbate wait times at lanes available to non-participating travelers—a result that the traveling public will absolutely not accept.

Participation in the Pre✓™ program must grow significantly beyond where it is in its early stages to be successful, and airport executives are eager to play an active role in accomplishing that critical objective.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO THOMAS L. HENDRICKS

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARY L. LANDRIEU

Question. Outside of expanding PreCheck (Pre✓™), what else can DHS do in the near-term to make air travel more convenient for passengers?

Answer. As Airlines for America (A4A) noted in its testimony, our members that carry passengers internationally are increasingly concerned about the adequacy of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) staffing at U.S. airports of entry. The first and often most durable memory a visitor to the United States has is her or his experience in being processed upon arrival. If we are to encourage travel and tourism to our country, therefore, Congress must assure that there are sufficient CBP personnel to promptly handle air passengers. International travel and tourism is an extraordinarily competitive sector and it is becoming more so. The United States cannot afford to be saddled with the reputation of delaying visitors at our gateway airports. Because of that, one thing that the Department of Homeland Security should not do is divert CBP personnel from U.S. airports of entry, which are already stretched, to either land border crossings or new overseas preclearance facilities.

With respect to processing of passengers at U.S. airport security checkpoints, we believe that the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) should continue to expand its Pre✓™ program. There is sufficient experience with the program that it has been successful in four essential respects:

—Applicants for participation in the program can be vetted thoroughly and consistent with security protocols before TSA accepts them;
—TSA's finite checkpoint resources are focused on other passengers;
—Overall passenger processing at the checkpoint is improved and therefore more convenient for our customers; and
—There is widespread belief that the program is a significant improvement to the travel experience by those passengers who have enrolled in it.

Question. Are you confident in the long-term viability of Pre✓™, TSA's risk-based screening program?

Answer. TSA has stated that Pre✓™ is a key component of the agency's intelligence-driven, risk-based approach to security. We believe that the Government has accumulated a great deal of both experience and intelligence information that enable it to pursue with confidence widely available, risk-based security programs such as Pre✓™ and Known Crewmember. We also believe that it has demonstrated a firm commitment to do so. Over the last decade, an extraordinary amount of our Nation's intelligence and security resources have been directed to identifying, evaluating, and countering threats to national security in general and civil aviation security in particular. Leveraging that know-how to better focus TSA resources is both

responsible and sensible. This approach is responsible because it does not compromise civil aviation security. It is sensible because it enables TSA to concentrate its limited resources where they are most needed and improves the experience of passengers because security checkpoints can function more efficiently by diverting fully vetted passengers from one-size-fits-all security measures.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO STEVEN HACKER

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARY L. LANDRIEU

Question. What are some of the highest profile global trade exhibitions in the United States?

Answer. Here is a short list of some of the most important high-profile global trade exhibitions that take place in the United States, not in any particular order:

—CONEXPO–CON/AGG 2014, March 4–8, 2014; [1]
—International CES, January 8–11, 2013;
—National Plastics Expo 2012, April 2–5, 2012;
—National Wood Flooring Expo, April 10–12, 2012;
—Lightfair International, May 9–11, 2012;
—Indigo New York, April 10–11, 2012;
—Texworld USA Summer, July 24–25, 2012;
—FOSE Conference and Exhibition, April 3–5, 2012;
—INFOComm 2012, June 9–15, 2012;
—NAB Show, April 14–17, 2012;
—National Hardware Show, May 1–3, 2012;
—National Association of Convenience Stores, October 7–10, 2012;
—SEMA Show, Oct 30–November 2, 2012;
—Waste Expo, April 30–May 3, 2012; and
—Interop Las Vegas, May 6–10, 2012.

Question. Is the United States at risk of losing any of these events to foreign convention destinations as a result of business travelers' difficulty in obtaining visas to this country?

Answer. Without inside knowledge it is impossible to know if any of the events listed are at risk of being replaced by foreign competition. Frankly, it is not likely though because most of these events have a very solid core of domestic U.S. exhibitors and attendees (buyers). What is known is that events that depend upon buyers and/or sellers from abroad are being negatively affected because many of their international attendees and exhibitors have been unable to secure U.S. visas on a timely basis or at all. In each instance, there are competing events taking place abroad. Those events are beneficiaries of our visa issuance difficulties as many buyers or sellers who cannot access the U.S. markets can usually attend events abroad with little inconvenience.

Question. Has the Department of State made any concerted efforts to expedite processing for the unique brand of business travelers and company representatives who attend professional exhibitions and conventions?

Answer. No, actually it is quite to the contrary. Not only have focused efforts on the most important U.S. events not taken place but it has become substantially more difficult for U.S. organizers to establish communications with consular officials abroad and to secure any meaningful support from them for more efficient visa issuance.

For example, in the past savvy U.S. organizers would prepare briefing files of their events for the use of local consular officials. Many of our members would periodically visit key embassies and consular offices in nations like China and India specifically to establish and maintain relationships with visa officials. That practice is now discouraged and in some cases prohibited, ostensibly because consular officials do not have time to meet with organizers. This has been a setback in our efforts to assist member organizers to familiarize Department of State personnel abroad about the nature of their events and who are the likeliest audiences to attend them. It is a classic case of attending to the urgent and not the more important issues which are likelier to provide broader and more long-lasting solutions. It is, in other words, poor management.

Question. Regarding the example you mentioned during your testimony about the trade delegation from India deciding to go elsewhere to purchase heavy equipment, please provide greater detail. When were they denied their visas? Have you spoken

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[1] This event occurs every 3 years and is the largest exhibition in the United States.

with them and did they provide you the reason they were given for their visas being denied?

Answer. Attached to this response you will find a series of documents (exhibits A–E) that provide more specific information about individuals and delegations from India and China who have recently encountered visa issuance difficulties that prevented their participation in U.S.-based exhibitions.

What is not recorded is the broad anecdotal evidence that U.S. exhibition organizers come across routinely. An example is the U.S. consular office in Delhi where the organizer of one of our most important global exhibitions was told by a consular official "if a visa application crosses my desk and the applicant is from the Punjab region (Delhi and surrounding environs) I do not even look at it." The stunned organizer was then informed by that consular official that it is his opinion that any visa applicants from the Punjab region wish only to immigrate illegally to the United States—this despite the fact that many of the applicants are owners of large and profitable farms who wish to come to U.S. exhibitions to purchase farm equipment. I should also point out to you that in exhibit E slide No. 8 contains data in chart form that seems to corroborate the allegation that there is strong bias among Department of State officials against issuing visas to applicants originating in the Punjab region. This slide presentation was prepared by NASSCOM a highly respected Indian Trade Organization.

In conclusion, permit me to add that the evidence that is now in your possession strongly suggests that our recommendations before the subcommittee for the establishment of a new visa commission coupled with the adoption of uniform guidelines to define more specifically when visas should or should not be issued are warranted if we are to bring some order to the manner in which U.S. visas are processed.

Please feel free to contact me if I can provide further information on these or other questions that bear upon matters before the subcommittee, and thank you again for the opportunity to share our members' concerns with the chair and members.

[Exhibits A–E follow:]

EXHIBIT A [1]

Name of the company	Name of the person	City	Reason for rejection	Date of consulate rejection
Alwasay Impex Pvt.ltd.	Mr. Syed Hatim Rustom	Mumbai	Visa rejection letter attached in the email—U.S. Consulate in Mumbai.	6–Jul–11
M/s. Magnum International	Mr. Mayur Agarwal	Kolkata	Frequently visiting Middle East countries for business—U.S. Consulate in Kolkata.	First week of June

[1] Excerpts from an Excel spreadsheet providing names and circumstances regarding two individuals from India who were rejected in 2011.

EXHIBIT B: Typical Rejection Letter

American Consulate General, Mumbai
78 Bhulabhai Desai Rd., Mumbai 400 026
http://mumbai.usconsulate.gov

Date: APPLICATION RECEIVED ON 06 JUL 2011 U. S. Consulate General Mumbai

Dear Visa Applicant :

We regret to inform you that you have been found ineligible for a nonimmigrant visa under Section 214(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act. Under U. S. Immigration law, all applicants for nonimmigrant visas are presumed to be intending immigrants. In order to be approved for a visa, applicants must satisfy the interviewing officer that they are entitled to the type of visa for which they are applying and that they will depart the United States at the end of their authorized temporary stay. This means that before a visa can be issued, applicants must demonstrate strong social, economic and/or familial ties outside the United States.

Unfortunately, because you either did not demonstrate strong ties outside the United States today or were not able to demonstrate that your intended activities in the U. S. would be consistent with the visa status, you are ineligible for a nonimmigrant visa.

Today's decision cannot be appealed. However, you may reapply. If you have additional evidence to demonstrate compelling reasons to depart the United States that you did not present today, you may wish to bring that with you. Otherwise, you should consider reapplying after there has been a significant change in your current situation.

If you do decide to reapply, you must submit a new application form and photo and pay the visa application fee again. There can be no guarantee that you will receive a different decision. Only a new interview can determine that.

Sincerely,

Consular Officer
Nonimmigrant Visa Section

EXHIBIT C

This is an email message from March 16, 2012, from Megan Tanel reporting the rejection of an eight-person delegation from Vietnam. Every attendee was a president or vice president of their company.

From: Megan Tanel
Sent: Friday, March 16, 2012, 11:20 a.m.
To: Hacker, Steven
Subject: RE: Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Homeland Security Hearing on Wednesday, March 21

Here's our latest issue with this—a delegation of eight from Vietnam were all denied Visa's for our World of Asphalt show in Charlotte this week. Every attendee

was a president or VP of their company. We're asking for more details as to why they were denied and working through our DC office.

MEGAN TANEL,
CEM, AEM.

EXHIBIT D

This includes two email messages from the "IAEE" Beijing office regarding recent Visa issues for Chinese nationals.

To: Richard Craig
From: Edward Liu
Subject: Visa Appointments and Rejection

Dear Richard,

Greetings again from IAEE and my company, CEMS Beijing Offices. As I did not receive your call for a meeting with the consular office this afternoon, I assumed that the visa officers and your good self were extremely busy and were not available for a discussion. For guidance, I would be returning to Beijing on 14 June for about 2 weeks, and would appreciate it if you could help facilitate a meeting during that period.

In the meantime, I would like to bring to your attention some of the problems being faced by our principals, viz the World Shoes Association (WSA) and the National Restaurants Association (NRA) and our authorised sales agencies marketing their two exhibitions in China.

Firstly, I just had a meeting with an official of the China Leather Industry Association (CLIA) this morning and was informed that some of the visa appointments are being fixed in August and even in September. This would affect the WSA Show which takes place in Las Vegas from 9–11 August 2010. According to the CLIA official, he had wanted to recruit another 22 exhibitors but they were unable to secure visa appointments in time for the show in LV in August. At the moment, we have already contracted some 239 booths at the WSA Show, and I am concerned that some of the exhibitors might have problems with their visa application in due course.

Similarly, there were also a couple of rejections for our 45 exhibitors for the NRA Show which opens in Chicago from tomorrow till 25 May. Overall, the rejection of visa applications has caused problems for the organisers, sales agencies and the exhibitors.

For the organisers, to recruit new exhibitors to fill the vacated booths would be extremely difficult. This would disrupt their overall planning and layout of the exhibition booths. For the sales agencies, the rejection of visas for the exhibitors would mean that their marketing efforts would have been in vain. It would demoralise them in their marketing efforts for the organisers. And for the exhibitors, their deposits would have been forfeited by the organisers. The exhibitors would have wasted all their efforts in making preparation for the exhibition, including freighting of goods and possibly the construction of exhibit stands etc., thus making their intended participation a very costly affair. And the rejection of their visa applications was probably no fault of theirs!

As mentioned recently, this lengthy visa interview process, the rejection of applications etc, is causing harm and damage to the American exhibition industry as a lot more genuine Chinese companies and exhibitors could have taken part in trade shows in the United States. This has also caused a lot of unhappiness amongst the Chinese associations and exhibitors, who are really keen to do business in the U.S.

Thus, on behalf of IAEE and our principals, I would like to seek a meeting or dialogue with your colleagues from the consular section, to better understand their requirements and to appeal for their understanding and assistance in handling some of the more established shows in the United States. If convenient, I would like to invite a few Chinese associations and sales agencies for this meeting. If not, I would be happy to meet with them with my own staff only.

I look forward to your kind assistance in arranging a suitable meeting with your colleagues from the consular section in the week of 14 June at a date convenient to them.

Sincerely,

EDWARD LIU,
Chief Representative, IAEE China Office.
Group Managing Director, Conference & Exhibition Management Services, CEMS Beijing Office.

Ms. Rosemary Gallant,
Principal Commercial Officer,
American Embassy, Beijing, China.

Dear Ms Gallant,

First of all, warmest greetings from IAEE China Office in Beijing. It has been a few months since we last met at your office in Beijing.

You may recall that we had discussed the problems of visa applications by Chinese executives and managers going to the United States, to take part in various trade shows and exhibitions. In particular, I had raised the problems being faced by Mr. Yang Ming of Ximaike International Exhibition Company, a member of our IAEE in China.

I had just met up with Mr. Yang Ming in Beijing last week and he has subsequently sent me the email below, to seek my assistance again. I would be grateful if your office could look into his case, and help solve his problems of visiting the United States, to take part in U.S. trade shows.

Your assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

EDWARD LIU,
PBM, Chief Representative, IAEE China Office.

From: Yang Ming,
Sent: Friday, 11 November, 2011, 8:55 a.m.
To: Edward Liu
Subject: Visa problem

Dear Mr. Edward Liu:

I write this letter to you in order to get your assistance to solve my visa problem of American.

Mr. Yang Ming, with passport number P01410407 and birth date Feb. 5th, 1972, is the vice general manager in XIMAIKE International Exhibition Co., Ltd being focus on organizing Chinese enterprises to attend international exhibitions.

Yang Ming's first time to United States of America was in 1998 and attended IMTS (now named National Design & Manufacturing Midwest) with Passport Number P3359527. During that applying visa period, a managing operator wrote May 1st, 1972 as his birth date by a mistake which caused the visa refusal in 2002 IFPE (International Exposition for Power Transmission).

The forthcoming birth date in visa applying is correct. Then, Mr. Yang Ming went to America in 2005, 2008 many times to participate IFPE (International Exposition for Power Transmission) and Auto Parts.

From 2009 when he submitted the visa applying to issue, it was informed that he has to wait for the further information or long-time unknown investigation. Sometimes, it is up to 7 months. The above makes the delaying to attend the exhibitions or the international flights tickets costs as well as the difficulties of the organizing work. The more about Mr. Yang, he will explain to the officer in the visa section of United States of America in Beijing. As a result, he will repeat all mentioned formalities each time in visa applying.

I has got an U.S. visa issued under the assist of IAEE with single entry this year. When I came back from America and continued to go further for renewing visa based on Auto Parts exhibition which goes without any result until now. The exhibition is closed now.

I don't have any relatives of my family members in USA, I have good and stable job in China.

Because XIMAIKE organizes more than 20 exhibitions in USA every year, we sincerely hope the visa applying for Mr. Yang Ming can go smooth which will ensure the exhibition organizing successfully.

It is highly appreciated for your reply.

MR. YANG MING,
XI MAI KE International Exhibition Co., LTD.

EXHIBIT E: Power Point presentation prepared by NASSCOM, a highly regarded Indian Trade Organization. Please direct your attention to slides #7 through #12. These slides focus on current U.S. Visa issuance challenges in India.

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Mobility and other issues for the Indian IT industry

US India ICT Working Group Meeting

13th December 2011

Som Mittal
President,
NASSCOM

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Significant headwinds threatening recovery of the Global economy

European Crisis

- The talk has shifted from 'Risk of default' to 'Demise of Euro'
- Financials markets jittery ; recession in EU a foregone conclusion, US may follow

Heightening global inflationary pressure

- Food inflation, high crude prices, soaring production costs , volatile commodities prices
- High interest rates in the Emerging economies

High Fiscal Deficit

- Most countries reeling under very high fiscal deficits
- Economies finding it hard to sustain growth and create new jobs

Possible Contagion may not be limited to Western world

- USD Rally making in difficult for other economies
- Export dependant economies affected
- Chinese economy's hard landing could be a possibility; real estate bust

12-Apr-1: In this situation, embracing a protectionist stance may actually worsen the situation and further delay the recovery

Meeting new customer needs beyond cost efficiency

NASSCOM

CLIENT INITIATIVES

- Process and Business model innovation
- Developing new technologies
- Global Expansion
- Innovation for emerging markets
- Increased R&D spend and IP creation

PARTNER RESPONSES

Aligning to Customer Business
- Core product development
- Strategic shared innovation
- Risk-Reward/Pay per Use pricing models

Maturity & Domain Expertise
- Global presence and exposure
- Verticalised solutions

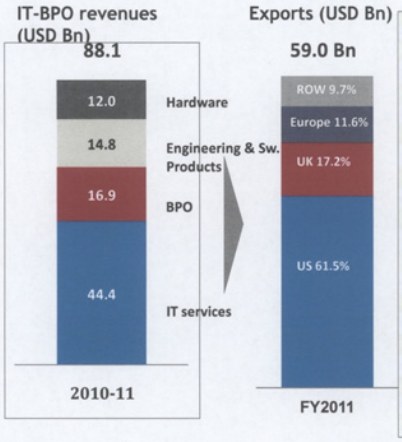
Tools & Frameworks
- Automation tools enabling predictive output and non linear growth
- Offshore Risk Management framework

Global Best Practices
- Average 18% growth in Quality certifications
- 25% of growth in Security certifications

12-Apr-12 3

India has built global leadership, industry reaching USD 88 bn revenues

NASSCOM

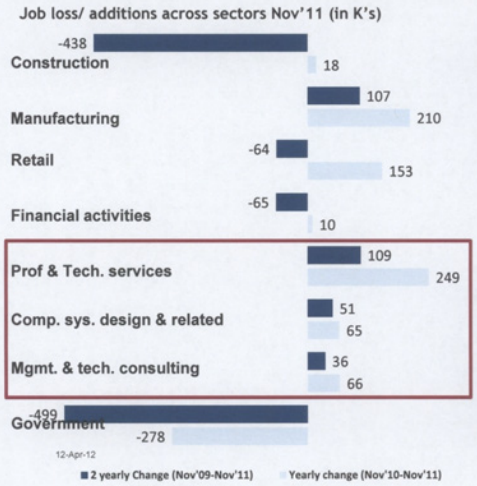


- 80% of Fortune 500 companies and 20 of world's largest banks are clients
- 70% share in global Knowledge services outsourcing industry
- 6% share in India's GDP and 14% in total exports
- 520+ global delivery centers

12-Apr-12 4

Unemployment? - Tech sector in the US is doing Great, contrary to the perception

NASSCOM



Unemployment rate comparison

	Aug 2010	Aug 2011
US National unemployment rate	9.5%	9.1%
Computer and mathematical occupations	4.3%	**3.7%**

1. Tech sector has been adding jobs in the US
2. Unemployment rate below 4% suggests shortages
3. Govt vertical has been shedding more jobs along with Constructions and Retail

5

Source: Non farm payroll

Contribution of the Indian IT industry to the US economy

NASSCOM

Employment

- Industry employees more than 100K employees (2011) in the US up from about 20K (2006), CAGR of 35% for 5 years
- Industry employees more than 25K (2011) US Nationals in the US compared from 750 (2006), CAGR of 99% for 5 years

Taxes

- Industry contributes close to 500Mn each year by way of taxes (Federal and State taxes)
- Industry contributed more than $1Bn each year towards US Social security system

Campus Hiring

- Indian companies have started attracting students at American universities,
  - In the last three years, some of the top Indian companies have visited more than 450 colleges in the United States and have made more than 1,100 job offers

12-Apr-12

6

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Inspite of doing right things industry is targeted in the US

- Visa rejections is a Non-tariff barrier (NTB)
- Approach of US agencies suggests concerted strategy
- Applicants from India being singled out?
- L1 centralization at Chennai will add on further costs
- All efforts to find solution(s) have been blocked
- This issue takes toll on growth of India US relationship

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Legislations and regulatory changes

- **Ohio order to curb offshoring (Aug 2010)**
- **Border Security Bill (Aug 2010):**
  - The bill nearly doubles H-1B and L visa fees, to as high as $4,500 per applicant
  - Typically all Indian companies leveraging Indian talent impacted.
- **James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2010 (Dec 2010):**
  - The 9/11 Act extends the duration of BSB from 4 years to 5 years
  - The Act also imposes 2% percent excise tax on goods and service purchased by foreign supplier (such as India)

latest

- **Centralisation of L visas in Chennai will add further costs for the companies (Nov 2011)**:
  - From 1st Dec, 2011 interview of all applications for L1 visas will held in Chennai.
  - All participants from across India will have to undertake travel for the interview

12-Apr-12 8

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Visa rejections update

- While no visa laws have been officially changed the visa rejections have increased drastically
- Even during period of sustained dialogue the situation has gone from bad to worse, Rejection rate still hovers around 40% or so
- Even at USCIS level unreasonable RFE's leading to only 20% acceptance
- Increased rejection rates seen across
  - All consulates
  - Visa categories (L and B stand out)
  - Across Indian, MNC and Captive companies
- Off late newer issues – salary levels for B1, terming "fraud" for what was earlier permitted, etc. are being touted as arguments
- **Applicants from India being singled out?**
  - China, Vietnam, Philippines, Brazil, Mexico, none have this problem

12-Apr-12 9

NASSCOM member survey on visa rejections

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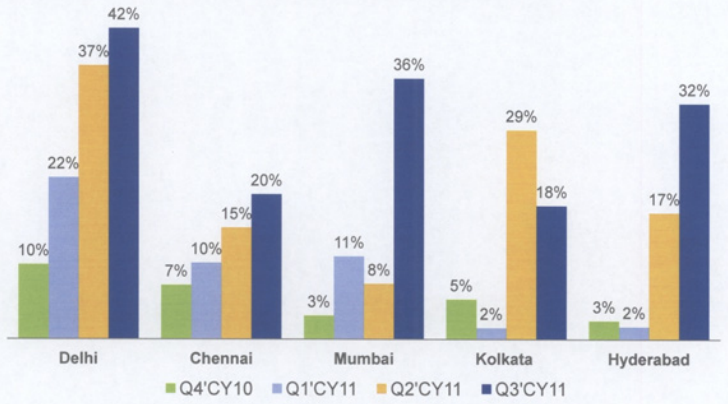
Visa rejection rate has constantly been going up across categories and missions



Average rejection rate across all visa categories

12-Apr-12 10

NASSCOM member survey on visa rejections

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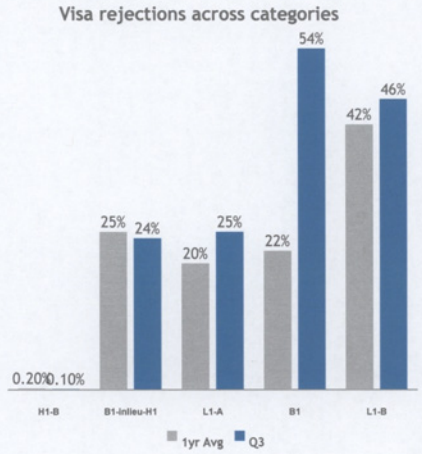
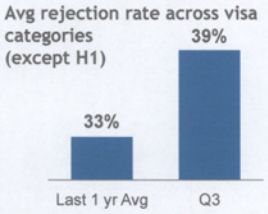
Visa rejections for B1 & L1 the highest, last quarter the worst





- There has been constant effort to muddle data
- Press releases have been misleading
- Statements such as "India gets more than 50% of the visas" confuses audiences
- Statements like "no rejections in the H1-B visas" selectively correct because RFE's exists

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Source: NASSCOM member survey

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NASSCOM efforts to resolve the situation

NASSCOM

- Continuously engaged in finding solutions and have proposed several solutions
- At US Counselor's behest we conducted the survey (Feb'11) reporting:
  - Majority of respondents said no the centralisation suggestion by the Embassy
- We have organized several consultation workshops for US Counsellor Affairs with our members
- But the arguments keep shifting (Training duration, KT, don't come back, poison letters, fraud & misuse…)
- We submitted detailed parameter list (in May'11) to help define 'Specialised Knowledge' but till date Embassy is silent on the feedback
- Key parameters of suggestions made (L1 visa) are on the following slide >>>

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NASSCOM proposal to US Counselor on specialized knowledge for L1 visas

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Eligibility Criteria	Computer Science Background	Non-Computer Science Background
Minimum Educational Qualification	Bachelors or equivalent in computer science stream (viz. B.E. / B. Tech in Computer Science / Electronics Engineering / Electronics and Communication / Information Technology / MCA any other qualification in the area of information technology / computer sciences)	Bachelors or equivalent in non-computer science streams
Minimum Total Work Experience	Minimum of 24 months of total work experience (including 12 months of work experience with present employer outside US)	Minimum of 36 months (including 12 months of work experience with present employer outside US)
Minimum Training	Documentation /undertaking of a minimum of 30 days (cumulative) of classroom / e-learning / or equivalent on the job training for all new (non-lateral) hires	Documentation /undertaking of a minimum of 90 days (cumulative) of classroom / e-learning / or equivalent on the job training for all new (non-lateral) hires
Minimum Compensation	$50,000 per annum	$50,000 per annum 13

India – US Totalisation treaty

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- US has signed more than 20 Totalisation agreements all with developed nations
- India also has successfully negotiated similar treaties with developed nations viz. Germany, France, Netherlands, Japan, Canada, Aus, Belgium…
- Why India and the US can have agreement in this space with common group countries but not amongst themselves?
- Estimates suggest Indian workers contribute more than $1B each year without receiving any benefits
- Need for immediate resolution of this problem

Industry proposes:
Till the time US system can accommodate country such as India for a comprehensive treaty. A short term arrangement between India and US Government that allows either exemption or refund of the contribution made by workers in their respective countries on reciprocity basis between both countries

Indian companies have seen enactment of tariff and non-tariff barriers in the US, whereas..

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US Companies in India (in Govt / PSU vertical)	Indian companies in the US (Federal / State Govt vertical)

• **UIDAI Aadhar:** 2 year contract awarded to US company to implement multimodal biometric solution for UIDAI
• **Department of Posts:** Contract to US company, Modernizing IT infrastructure, transition to a more efficient system
• **Bank of India , Bank of Baroda:** Technology enabled business transformation project-implementation of an enterprise wide SoA
	• Have made significant investments into the US
	• Face stringent norms to be classified as Govt supplier with long qualification cycles
	• Have seen slew of tariff and NTB's:
	  ○ Ohio banning offshoring of IT projects
	  ○ 2% percent excise tax on goods and service purchased by foreign supplier(9/11 bill)

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What does the Industry seek?

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Visa activism

- Discrimination against Indians should stop
- While industry supports action on visa misuse and fraud
- Actions taken by the agency should not be back door protectionism

Need for Service visa

- **No short term work visa** in the US,
  - Most other countries (UK, Germany, France, Japan, India..) offer such visas
  - EU is working on short term work visa to cover entire EU territory
- Cap- Lottery system of allotting H-1B visas
  - Leads to excessive applications being filed
  - Companies need to predict their demand for visas 1.5 yrs in advance
- Mid-year filing/adjustments is not an option - leads to some visas being unutilized

Totalisation treaty

- US Congress and SSA need to take into account that developing countries and India in particular will treat social security from a different perspective
- Exceptions need to be made and an administration level push is required

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO SARA NELSON

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR MARY L. LANDRIEU

KNOWN CREWMEMBER PROGRAM

Question. TSA's Known Crewmember initiative allows pilots to forego regular screening procedures if they show two forms of verifiable ID, but flight attendants are not eligible to participate in the program.

Can you explain the background checks that flight attendants typically undergo as part of the hiring process and your association's perspective on this policy?

Answer. TSA regulations require flight attendants to undergo a 10-year criminal history records check and an employment history investigation as a condition of employment. Pilots are subject to the same regulation. The regulations are designed to ensure the trustworthiness of each flight attendant and pilot to serve as crewmembers responsible for the safety and security of every flight and they are effective. For this reason, the U.S. airline industry and all crewmember unions advocate inclusion of flight attendants in the Known Crewmember program.

Question. With airline pilots, TSA has the ability to access a central database to verify a pilots' identity through the Known Crewmember program. TSA has identified the lack of a similar database for Flight Attendants as an impediment to expediting screening for Flight Attendants. Can you please respond to this issue?

Answer. Some airlines have a database of flight attendants that would provide the information needed by Known Crewmember (KCM) to verify the current employment status and identity of flight attendants. Other airlines need to update their existing database and some airlines need to create such a database. The TSA needs to provide the specifications for connectivity to KCM for existing airline flight attendant databases or flight attendant databases to be created.

CHECKED BAGGAGE FEES

Question. According to a Government Accountability Office report from July 2010 (Cite: GA0–10–785, page 29), the Association of Flight Attendants conducted a member survey in February of that year indicating that checked baggage fees have led to excess and oversized carry-on bags, slow passenger boarding, pushback delays, stressful boarding situations, full overhead bins, and injuries to airline staff and passengers from lifting oversize carry-on bags.

From your organization's perspective, can you please explain the impact of checked baggage fees on flight attendants' general ability to facilitate passenger boarding and efficient, customer-friendly air travel?

Answer. Overly large and bulky carry-on items have been a problem for commercial aviation operations for several decades.

An examination of past airline and Government data suggests that the frequency of injuries among cabin crew is high, but reliable statistics on crew and passenger injuries caused by carry-on items are difficult to obtain. In the mid-1980s, as problems mounted, the Association of Flight Attendants gathered evidence from its members and presented the data to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) with a request for limits on carry-on baggage. Hearings were held in 1985; a rule proposed in 1986 followed by more hearings; and a final rule, Federal aviation regulation section 121.589 Carry-on baggage, was published in June 1987, followed closely by advisory circular (AC) 121–29, an industry guidance document published in November 1987. Unfortunately, the regulation contains two fundamental weaknesses: each airline is allowed to set policies (approved by the FAA) dictating numbers and sizes of passenger carry-on items, and airlines are allowed to enforce their own policies. Despite minor revisions made since initial passage of the carry-on baggage regulation, neither weakness has been corrected.

According to the TSA Common Strategy, flight attendants are supposed to carefully observe passengers during the boarding process to watch for suspicious items and behaviors. Prior to takeoff, flight attendants can ask the captain to subject a suspicious passenger to additional security scrutiny. If warranted, the passenger can be removed from the plane before takeoff or monitored more carefully in flight.

The ability of flight attendants to provide this critical final layer of pre-flight security is severely diminished by carry-on baggage chaos. Flight attendants report being distracted from their critical security responsibilities by attempts to wedge excessive quantities and sizes of carry-on bags into overhead bins, and often time-consuming efforts to convince passengers to take excess bags back to the jetway for stowage as checked baggage.

While there may appear to be increases in the quantity of baggage brought into the cabin since airlines began charging fees for checked bags, to AFA's knowledge

there have been no surveys conducted or statistical data generated that isolate checked baggage fees as the significant contributing factor. In fact, AFA believes that other factors, including flight reductions that have led to decreases in total numbers of seats and increased load factors and seat pitch reductions to increase seating capacities on individual airplanes are potentially greater contributors.

Thus, in AFA's opinion the specific factors that contribute to the crew distractions, schedule disruptions and workplace safety hazards created by excessive amounts of carry-on baggage are unknown. However, what is clear is that a simple, standardized policy applied to all passengers and enforced prior to the security screening area is necessary. A standard bag size dimensional limit that accommodates most passengers' carry-on baggage is essential to curtail attempts to bring onboard overstuffed bags that cannot be accommodated in the storage location under the seats in front of passengers. Once the overhead bins are full these larger, bulkier bags must be checked prior to closing the aircraft door, leading to crew distractions and flight delays. Smaller, standard sized carry-on bag limits will ensure that passengers are able to accommodate their allowable amounts of one carry-on bag plus one personal item in the overhead bins and in the under-seat storage areas.

CONCLUSION OF HEARING

Senator LANDRIEU. And Mr. Hacker, I am going to schedule a special meeting between you and your association and the State Department to talk more carefully through this because it is absolutely essential. And I know it is the idea of this administration to foster international trade, but in theory it sounds great, but this is the practice of international trade. This is where the rubber hits the road. This is whether it happens or not. And all the good wishes here in the United States for selling our equipment, ideas, and professional services overseas cannot happen if people who are buying them cannot get access to the trade shows where we are displaying some of our best services and wares. And so I am going to ask for a special meeting with State to focus with you on this.

I think we are making some headway on the tourism piece of this. I think we have a long way to go on this more business-focused trade situation.

This has been a very good hearing. I am glad we had it. I thank the staff.

And the meeting is recessed.

[Whereupon, at 12:06 p.m., Wednesday, March 21, the hearing was concluded, and the subcommittee was recessed, to reconvene subject to the call of the Chair.]

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