



Committee on
HOMELAND SECURITY
Chairman Peter T. King

Opening Statement

June 7, 2012

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**Statement of Chairman Mike Rogers (R-AL)
Subcommittee on Transportation Security**

**"TSA's Efforts to Fix Its Poor Customer Service Reputation and
Become a Leaner, Smarter Agency"**

**June 7, 2012
Remarks as Prepared**

I would like to welcome everyone to this hearing and thank Administrator Pistole for being here.

You have a tough job and we appreciate your service.

I think we can agree: every person in this great country of ours has the right to criticize and complain about TSA.

But what sets you and I apart from those that just want to criticize TSA, Administrator Pistole, is that we have an obligation to fix this mess.

I know, for a fact, how dedicated you are to our security, and of your distinguished service to our nation.

But, the fact is over the last two years, progress at TSA has come at a snail's pace and in some ways it has gone backwards.

It is not enough to say the agency is becoming more risk-based.

The American people need to see immediate changes that impact them.

For example, while the PreCheck program has gotten off to a successful start, we're talking about something that does not benefit the average traveler yet.

So let's start talking about what we can do to fix the broken and outdated policies that do affect most people.

On Monday, Congressman Walsh and I visited Chicago O'Hare International Airport.

We met with travelers afterward to discuss their thoughts on TSA.

The overwhelming majority of those that attended the meeting expressed frustration that 10 years after 9/11, TSA is still collecting pocketknives.

It's still collecting water bottles.

It's still collecting pill cutters and razor blades.

And of course, travelers are subject to invasive searches and a loss of privacy.

The fact is, they are right to be fed up with TSA.

Mr. Pistole, in my view, the prohibited items list is the place for you to start making immediate changes.

Before 9/11, travelers were trained to cooperate with hijackers because in those days, history had proven that if you cooperated, the plane would land safely.

We all know 9/11 changed that mentality in just minutes.

As we adapt and evolve to meet the threats of a post-9/11 world, so do the terrorists continue to evolve in their tactics.

The problem is that TSA is too far behind the curve to see what's coming next.

The truth is, Mr. Pistole, I believe you are too bogged down in managing an oversized workforce to mitigate the next potential threat.

That's a chilling reality.

And despite our efforts here, your technology procurement processes are still a mess.

In the case of TSA's new Credential Authentication Technology, all signs point to what I believe is another wasteful investment.

This subcommittee will hold a separate hearing on that technology in two weeks.

We need to make our transportation systems as secure as possible, at the lowest possible cost and intrusion on the American taxpayer.

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