



One Hundred Twelfth Congress  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20515

June 30, 2011

The Honorable John S. Pistole  
Administrator  
Transportation Security Administration  
601 South 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
Arlington, VA 20598

Dear Administrator Pistole:

I am gravely concerned about the security breach at John F. Kennedy International airport by a Nigerian national last week whereby the man was able to successfully pass through the security checkpoint and fly from New York to Los Angeles using an expired boarding pass issued in another person's name. As I understand it, the transportation security officer designated as a travel document checker is vested with the responsibility of verifying the veracity of the identification and confirming that the travel documents are in order – that simply, the name on the identification presented matches the name on a boarding pass – that's the job. Since New York City remains a top terror target, I would expect that transportation security officers deployed in the New York area airports are among the most diligent. Clearly, this was not the case last week. Similarly, I am concerned with the additional breach of security at Virgin America airlines in which a gate agent boarded a passenger without confirming the validity of the boarding pass.

Although Committee staff has yet to be adequately briefed on the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) risk-based checkpoint screening initiative despite repeated requests, I urge you to audit the performance of all travel document checkers before fully implementing this program.

Additionally, please provide a briefing to the Committee no later than July 8, 2011, on the immediate measures TSA is taking to address these recent failures and any disciplinary action being taken against the travel document checker at JFK. It is my sincere hope that TSA will be implementing greater oversight of the boarding pass issuance and verification process between TSA and the airlines. Nearly ten years after 9/11, failures of this kind should be a thing of the distant past.

Sincerely,



PETER T. KING  
Chairman