



Committee on  
**HOMELAND SECURITY**  
Chairman Michael McCaul

*Opening Statement*

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**Statement of Subcommittee Chairman John Katko (R-N.Y.)  
Subcommittee on Transportation Security**

**“Risk-Based Security: Assessing the Path Forward for TSA Pre✓™”**

**Remarks as Prepared**

I would like to thank our witnesses for their participation in this hearing. We know your time is valuable, and we appreciate you taking the time to be here today to discuss the future of TSA’s Pre✓™ program.

At the outset, I would like to express my sincerest concern for the victims who were attacked last Friday night at Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport. Transportation Security officers have the important responsibility of securing our nation’s aviation systems, and, once again, we have seen TSA and law enforcement personnel act swiftly and bravely to protect passengers from a security threat at the checkpoint. I commend the TSA and law enforcement personnel in New Orleans, as well as at airports across the country, for their service and dedication to keeping the traveling public safe.

Over the last three years, TSA has adopted a more common sense, risk-based approach to passenger screening through the implementation of its Pre✓™ program. Since its inception, TSA Pre✓™ has garnered a positive response from both passengers and transportation industry stakeholders for moving away from a one-size-fits-all approach to aviation security. TSA Pre✓™ has fundamentally changed the way Americans think about passenger screening in a post-9/11 world, and I believe it should continue expanding. However, in order to do so, this program must grow and mature in a manner that saves taxpayer dollars while also improving the experience of the traveling public and reducing security risks to aviation. Growth in Pre✓™ should not be at the expense of any of these core objectives, and I am concerned that several initiatives related to expansion of TSA Pre✓™ do not meet these criteria.

One such initiative is TSA’s Managed Inclusion program, which involves conducting a ‘real-time’ threat assessment to identify passengers who are eligible for TSA Pre✓™ on a flight-by-flight basis through the use of such tools as passenger screening canine teams, explosives trace detection technology, and

behavior detection officers. While this program may help reduce wait times and increase utilization of TSA Pre✓™ lanes, it has not been shown to improve the experience of travelers or reduce risks to aviation.

On the contrary, passengers who go through the TSA Pre✓™ enrollment process and pay \$85 for expedited screening are not seeing the benefits that were promised to them; this is largely due to the fact that passengers who did not enroll and are unfamiliar with TSA Pre✓™ are being ushered into expedited screening lanes through Managed Inclusion with little-to-no information about the expedited screening process. The experience for many of these travelers is at best confusing and at worst infuriating when TSA screeners act as though travelers who have been conditioned for over a decade to take their shoes and belts off should suddenly know to leave them on.

In addition to the poor and confusing experience many travelers face due to Managed Inclusion, serious questions remain as to the overall effectiveness of the Managed Inclusion program at detecting threats. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report in December 2014 and found that TSA failed to comprehensively test Managed Inclusion's security effectiveness. Rather, TSA has tested the effectiveness of individual Managed Inclusion security layers but has not yet tested the security effectiveness of the overall Managed Inclusion process as it functions as a whole. TSA's failure to conduct such testing leaves us without an accurate assessment of the program's performance. While TSA has cited the random nature of the Managed Inclusion program as a positive, I believe that the benefits of this unpredictable program have not yet been shown to outweigh the potential risks. Simply put, TSA should not continue operating Managed Inclusion if it does not address the issues I have just outlined.

Finally, we recently learned that a convicted felon and former member of a domestic terror organization was allowed to utilize Pre✓™ screening as part of TSA's Risk Assessment program. Risk Assessment determines Pre✓™ eligibility by using risk algorithms built into TSA's Secure Flight system and grants certain passengers Pre✓™ status on a flight-by-flight basis. In this instance, we understand that even though the Travel Document Checker recognized the individual from media reports, a TSA supervisor allowed the passenger to proceed through Pre✓™ screening. We must be wary not to become complacent at screening checkpoints, because of Pre✓™, and it is important that screening officers are empowered to use their better judgment in the screening process.

Fortunately, we all share the same goal, which is to protect the millions of passengers who use our nation's critical transportation systems every day. With this in mind, the subcommittee looks forward to today's important dialogue on how to enhance risk-based security, going forward.

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