



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

May 1, 2020

The Honorable David Pekoske
Administrator
Transportation Security Administration
601 South 12th Street
Arlington, VA 20598-6001

Dear Administrator Pekoske:

We write to request that you issue an immediate requirement for airline passengers to wear masks in order to be screened at Transportation Security Administration (TSA) security checkpoints. We also request that you require all TSA employees to wear masks when interacting with the public and provide them with the masks necessary to do so. Finally, we request that you conduct a rapid review of TSA policies and practices to ensure they comply with current public health and Occupational Safety and Health Administration guidance and standards.

As you are well aware, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the TSA workforce has been extensive and tragic, with more than 500 employees testing positive for the coronavirus and, sadly, five losing their lives. It is impossible to know how many passengers have also been infected due to close contact during TSA checkpoint screening. Travel volume has decreased dramatically, but more than 100,000 passengers are still flying each day, and the number of infections among the TSA workforce continues to rise. Currently, some Transportation Security Officers continue to pat down passengers without wearing masks, and we are aware of at least one instance in which an officer took off gloves in order to conduct a pat-down barehanded.

It is imperative that you do everything in your power to prevent further infections among the TSA workforce and the traveling public, especially as more people look to resume traveling. Requiring that travelers and officers alike wear masks while interacting at checkpoints and reviewing current policies and practices are necessary steps to restoring confidence in a safe and secure aviation system. Thank you for your prompt attention to these critical issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bennie G. Thompson".

BENNIE G. THOMPSON
Chairman

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J. Luis Correa".

J. LUIS CORREA
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation and
Maritime Security