



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Statement of Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)**

***Assessing the TSA Checkpoint: The PreCheck Program and Airport Wait Times***

**Subcommittee on Transportation & Protective Security**

**May 17, 2018**

I certainly appreciate the challenging job that TSA has in accommodating the increase in domestic travelers while striving to maintain the safe, secure, and reliable air transit that the flying public expects and deserves. Long wait times at airports do not just create an unpleasant flying experience, but present broader security concerns as crowded checkpoints can quickly become soft targets.

While I understand that TSA must find creative approaches to strike that difficult balance, I do echo many of the Chairman's concerns regarding the inclusion of unvetted individuals in the PreCheck program. I addressed some of these concerns last Congress, when I introduced the "Securing Expedited Screening Act" with Chairman Katko and then Subcommittee on Transportation Protective Security Ranking Member Kathleen Rice.

This legislation sought to address security vulnerabilities in how TSA drove traffic to PreCheck lanes by restricting access to expedited airport security screening to PreCheck program participants and other "known" or vetted passengers. After the bill passed the House in July 2015, TSA ended the practice known as "Managed Inclusion." However, TSA has more work to do.

While I am fully-committed to working with TSA to avoid wait times like we saw in the summer of 2016, I do believe that expedited screening should be limited to those who are thoroughly vetted. I look forward to hearing TSA's plans for getting us to a place where this is a reality.

Additionally, while I am pleased that domestic travel continues to grow and interested in hearing TSA's plans to accommodate this growth, I am troubled by the downturn in international travel to the U.S. I hope to gain more perspective on this recent concerning trend from industry stakeholders present here today.

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