



**OPENING STATEMENT**

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**MEDIA CONTACTS**

Susan Phalen, Matthew Ballard

**Statement of Subcommittee Chairman John Katko (R-NY)  
Transportation Security Subcommittee  
House Homeland Security Committee**

*Transportation Security Acquisition Reform Act: Examining Remaining Challenges.*

Remarks as Prepared

Taxpayer dollars should never be wasted on technology that is not effective or meeting our needs—unfortunately, this is a problem with which the Transportation Security Administration has struggled for many years. Our government relies upon private sector innovation to develop security technologies. However, that innovation comes with a price tag, and we cannot reasonably expect the private sector to spend millions of dollars in the research and development of new and emerging technologies without greater transparency and communication from both TSA and the Department of Homeland Security as to what their future needs and technology investments will be.

In the agency's short history, TSA has exhibited a number of deficiencies in its procurement processes. However, the acquisitions challenges facing TSA are not insurmountable, and it is incumbent upon this subcommittee to provide the necessary oversight to streamline the agency's policies and procedures, while ensuring that taxpayer dollars are appropriately spent on technologies that are proven to be effective at protecting our nation's transportation systems. I recently sat down with Administrator Neffenger, and I know that he is acutely aware of some of the challenges TSA faces in this regard. I look forward to continuing to support him in his efforts to lead and reform this agency.

The purpose of today's hearing is to examine the challenges the Transportation Security Administration faces in their research and development of security technologies and how those challenges affect TSA's acquisitions practices. On December 18th, 2014, President Obama signed the "Transportation Security Acquisition Reform Act" into law, which was introduced by Congressman Hudson last year. This bipartisan bill was passed on the premise that TSA must be more transparent and strategic in identifying its technology investment needs, while working closely with industry stakeholders to develop and procure future technologies. In addition, this legislation required TSA to submit to Congress a strategic five-year technology investment plan. This plan, which was provided to this Committee in August of this year, lays out the agency's vision for near-term technology investments, while providing a clearer vision of the agency's often opaque acquisitions strategy. Producing a five year plan is a meaningful step in the right direction and includes a number of pragmatic observations and goals.

However, more must be done to build on this strategy and turn words on paper into a more efficient and streamlined procurement process. Earlier this year, Ranking Member Rice and I visited the Transportation Systems Integration Facility to observe how TSA tests and evaluates existing and emerging screening technologies. Additionally, we have met with a number of industry stakeholders offering a range of impressive technologies and innovations to better-secure our nation's transportation systems. These stakeholders, like TSA, share a desire to improve the security of the traveling public and mitigate threats from a rapidly evolving threat landscape and have talked frankly about the state of existing technologies and the challenges facing the agency. However, many of them also have shared troubling anecdotes about the bureaucratic difficulties they have encountered in attempts to partner with TSA and the Department of Homeland Security's Science and Technology Directorate.

I am concerned that bureaucracy and stagnation are preventing TSA and DHS from being responsive to legitimate security threats facing our nation. Indeed, while it is critical that any acquisitions process include safeguards to prevent wasting taxpayer dollars on poor investments and unproven technology, it is just as critical that we are not failing in our most basic mission—to prevent terror attacks against transportation targets. This, no doubt, is a challenge, and I am intent on holding both TSA and industry accountable to a reasoned, effective investment strategy. I am concerned about whether TSA is making procurement and investment decisions in a vacuum, without leveraging sufficient support from other government experts and stakeholders. Additionally, I remain unconvinced that TSA and the Department of Homeland Security's Science & Technology directorate are working closely enough to develop and test existing and future technology. A lack of cross-pollination and communication between these entities is, I believe, hindering their ability to meet mission needs. I look forward to hearing different perspectives from our witnesses today on how DHS and TSA work together to make procurement decisions, how this Committee's legislation has informed this process, and what more needs to be done to ensure that taxpayer dollars are being spent in a deliberate and strategic manner.

I would like to thank all of you for being here today. We have a two-panel hearing here today. We will begin by hearing testimony from a panel of government witnesses, followed by a panel representing the security technology industry.

With that, I now recognize the Gentlelady from New York, Ms. Rice, for her opening statement.

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