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7TH DISTRICT, COLORADO



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## Congress of the United States House of Representatives

February 25, 2009

The Honorable Janet Napolitano  
Secretary  
Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Napolitano:

It has come to my attention the Transportation Security Administration intends to finalize a proposed rule for the Large Aircraft Security Program. This program intends to mitigate several security vulnerabilities against the general aviation (GA) industry. While I am highly supportive of threat reduction, I have concerns about some portions of this rule as to how it will affect many fundamental components of GA. On behalf of general aviation airports in Colorado affected by this rule, and other stakeholder, I would like you and TSA to answer the following questions.

First, one of the inherent benefits to general aviation from a business perspective is private aircraft can quickly be dispatched for executives to travel to destinations across the nation. One requirement in the NPRM would mandate American-operated private aircraft to submit its manifest for referencing against the Terrorist Screening Database. Clearly we cannot allow terrorists into our nation through private aircraft, so screening is vital. Will TSA and other agencies conducting the watch-list matching have the personnel and technology to accommodate charter flights which are dispatched with very little notice or preparation?

Second, one provision under LASP potentially requires private charter flights to accommodate a Federal Air Marshall (FAM). FAMs are valuable for their covert status. On a charter flight of business executives, it is quite obvious if a FAM is aboard or not. Moreover, FAMs should be placed on commercial flights which are most likely terrorist targets. What is the value of having an overt law enforcement office on a chartered flight? Will TSA hire additional FAMs to meet this requirement, or will they be taken from priority commercial flights?

TSA has held five public hearings to receive testimony and suggestions on the NPRM, and I commend them for this. However, before finalization, I ask you to consider these and many other questions raised which will impact general aviation. I await your timely response.

Sincerely,

Ed Perlmutter  
Member of Congress

Cc: Congressman Bennie Thompson

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