

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

June 15, 2004

Administrator David Stone
TSA-1
Transportation Security Administration
601 South 12th Street
Arlington, VA 22202-4220

Dear Administrator Stone:

We appreciate your recent update on the efforts of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to work on the voluntary, advanced portion of flight attendant security training that was required by P.L. 108-176, Vision 100 – Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act, that was signed by President Bush on December 12, 2003. However, we are concerned with the lack of progress on developing guidelines for mandatory, industry-wide flight attendant security training and would appreciate knowing of your progress on developing such guidelines and when we can expect these standards to be in place.

As you know, it was our nation's flight attendants that were among the first victims on September 11th, 2001, while doing their duty to protect the safety and security of everyone onboard those aircraft that were hijacked. Currently, there are Federal Air Marshals (FAMs) onboard flights and the Federal Flight Deck Officer (FFDO) Program has been implemented. However, flight attendants are still indicating that adequate and comprehensive security training is not widely available. We find this unacceptable, as flight attendants are the only part of this security team that are guaranteed to be in the cabin on 100 percent of all flights and it is absolutely crucial that they receive adequate security training. We cannot ignore the urgent need for flight attendant security training as it has become clear that Al Qaeda is still targeting U.S. aircraft and that the GAO has reported that weapons are still making it onboard the aircraft.

We remain troubled that flight attendants are reporting that the training programs implemented by carriers vary drastically throughout the industry and in some cases are not focused on effectiveness, but by what is quickest and most convenient for the airlines. We are further troubled that after almost three years, TSA has done nothing to address the fact that there is still this large discrepancy in the type and requirements of the industry's flight attendant security training programs. In order to be assured that our aviation system is as safe and secure as possible, and that our nation's flight attendants are adequately prepared, there must be basic, mandatory security training requirements for all airlines to abide by when developing their training programs.

Congress has spoken on the urgent need for comprehensive, mandatory and industry wide standards for flight attendant security training three times since September 11th, 2001, and it is frustrating that TSA has still not taken action on issuing those guidelines. We strongly urge you to take all necessary steps to issue comprehensive, industry wide flight attendant security training guidelines that encompass all the requirements outlined in Vision 100. It has always been the intent of Congress that TSA issue such industry wide standards to ensure as safe and secure an aviation system as possible.

We look forward to working with you to issue and implement these guidelines as expeditiously as possible, and look forward to your prompt consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Arny Hallin

Tom F. Kelly

Allen Fitch

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Patrick Leahy

Mark Dayton

Jay Rockefeller

Murray

Ed Kennedy

Byron D. Dorgan

Patty Murray

R. W. Wy

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