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FOR A HEARING ON

"Organizational Oversight: Examining TSA's Post-Modernization Efforts"

BEFORE THE

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND MARITIME SECURITY

March 12, 2024

<u>Introduction</u>

Good morning, Chairman Gimenez, Ranking Member Thanedar, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for inviting me and my Transportation Security Administration (TSA) colleagues to testify on the effectiveness of TSA's current organizational structure in supporting the Agency's critical security mission.

TSA was created in just 69 days in the wake of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States. With the signing of the *Aviation and Transportation Security Act of 2001* on November 19, 2001, TSA was statutorily authorized to secure the Nation's transportation sector and systems to ensure freedom of movement for people and commerce. We are very proud of our workforce and our mission.

Currently led by Administrator David Pekoske, who is serving his second five-year term as TSA Administrator, the Agency is continually adapting its responses, technologies, and policies to address known and potential threats to the Nation's transportation system. TSA accomplishes its mission by remaining flexible and resilient, investing in our frontline workforce, maintaining and strengthening our partnerships with transportation stakeholders and international governments to raise global transportation security standards, and continuing to drive innovation to remain ahead of emerging threats.

TSA Modernization Act of 2018

The *TSA Modernization Act of 2018* (*TSA Modernization Act*), enacted in October of 2018, served as the first and only reauthorization legislation since the Agency's creation. Among other things, Section 1905 of the *TSA Modernization Act* addressed operational leadership and organizational issues and Section 1906 directed TSA to conduct an Agency-wide review to

identify and effectuate spending reductions and administrative savings that could be achieved by streamlining and restructuring TSA divisions.

In accordance with Sections 1905 and 1906 of the *TSA Modernization Act*, Administrator Pekoske and TSA senior leadership conducted a required organizational review, taking into account congressional and industry feedback, and TSA's strategic priorities and goals. On December 21, 2018, Administrator Pekoske approved realignment of numerous functions within TSA to enhance security effectiveness and efficiency of the Agency by uniting like functions, reducing stovepipes, and promoting unity of effort throughout the organization. For example, the realignment:

- Established four distinct organizational pillars within TSA: Operations Support (OS), Security Operations (SO), Enterprise Support (ES), and Law Enforcement/Federal Air Marshal Service (LE/FAMS). Each pillar is led by an Executive Assistant Administrator (EAA), who reports directly to the Office of the Administrator.

- Established the Office of the Administrator, which includes the Deputy Administrator and Chief of Staff, along with the offices of Chief Counsel; Chief Finance Office; Civil Rights & Liberties/Office of Traveler Engagement; Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility; Inspections; Investigations; Legislative Affairs; Strategic Communications and Public Affairs; and Strategy, Policy Coordination, and Innovation.

- Organized all domestic aviation security, international security, and surface security operations under Security Operations.

- Created the Policy, Plans, and Engagement (PPE) office under Operations Support, responsible for all domestic and international security policy development and industry/stakeholder outreach and engagement.

- Established the Enrollment Services and Vetting Programs (ESVP) office under Operations Support to streamline and create efficiency in credentialing and vetting processes.

- Organized multiple operational risk analysis and innovation functions in the Requirements and Capabilities Analysis (RCA) office under Operations Support.

- Consolidated individual Business Management Offices into streamlined Resource Management Offices (RMO) within each pillar.

These changes better aligned TSA's various functional areas into lines of business, minimized duplication of effort, and allowed for delegation of authority to the optimum level of decision making. In addition, our revised structure created enhanced career paths for employees, streamlined processes and procedures, reduced costs by consolidating functions and eliminating redundancies, enabled more strategic resource allocation, and increased innovation and collaboration Agency-wide. As a result, TSA is able to more effectively manage risk, identify requirements, deploy resources, and assess operational outcomes.

TSA's Strategic Priorities and Goals

TSA's vision is to remain an agile, world-class security agency embodied by a professional workforce that engages transportation security partners and the traveling public to outmatch dynamic threats. To accomplish this, TSA implemented a comprehensive governance framework that establishes a clear decision-making structure and enables TSA to address current and future threats. TSA sets Agency goals via an end-to-end risk-based, strategic planning process. TSA

collaborated with stakeholders across the transportation system to develop the 2018 – 2026 TSA Strategy, an eight-year plan highlighting key priorities necessary to fulfill TSA's mission.

To support the TSA Strategy and emphasize and reinforce accountability, TSA issued subsequent execution plans called the Administrator's Intent. The Administrator's Intent describes short- and medium-term objectives to advance TSA toward our strategic priorities. The Administrator's Intent, now in its third edition, focuses on twenty critical issues involving people, partnerships, and technology, and builds on TSA successes. Through 2026, TSA's priorities are: investing in our frontline workforce; maintaining and strengthening partnerships with transportation stakeholders and international partners to raise transportation security standards; and continuing technological innovation to remain ahead of emerging threats.

TSA develops Roadmaps, aligned with the Administrator's Intent, on specific cross-cutting and emerging topics. Roadmaps articulate the Agency's vision for approaching these critical areas and enable us to work together more effectively with our employees and external partners to achieve shared goals and objectives. Currently, TSA has Roadmaps for Cybersecurity, LE/FAMS, Insider Threat, Open Architecture, Air Cargo Security, Checked Baggage, Identity Management, and Biometrics.

Additionally, these comprehensive strategic planning activities inform TSA's multi-year budget planning process and Capital Investment Plan. TSA publishes its Capital Investment Plan annually and it serves as our guide for determining and prioritizing future investments critical to mission success. The Capital Investment Plan reflects TSA's commitment to continuous and sustained investment in transportation security equipment, technology, and other capital investments necessary to achieve TSA's strategic priorities within the context of its operational environment and threat landscape.

Finally, the TSA Strategy and its supporting Administrator's Intent, Roadmaps, and annual Capital Investment Plan, align with Departmental and National strategies and plans, such as the National Security Strategy, National Strategy for Transportation Security, National Strategy for Aviation Security, and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Strategic Plan. This strategic alignment ensures TSA's plans are cohesive and drive activities to execute our mission.

TSA's Four Organizational Pillars

Operations Support

Operations Support (OS) is led by Executive Assistant Administrator (EAA) Stacey Fitzmaurice and provides innovative solutions and processes to protect U.S. transportation systems and the traveling public. OS has over 1,200 federal employees spanning four program offices. The majority of our OS workforce is located in the National Capital Region to include TSA Headquarters, the Freedom Center in Virginia, and the Annapolis Junction Operations Center in Maryland. Additionally, OS employees support TSA's mission from around the world, including employees based at the TSA Operations Center in Colorado, Field Intelligence Officers located nationwide, and International Industry Representatives stationed overseas.

OS encompasses the program offices of Intelligence and Analysis; Requirements and Capabilities Analysis; Policy, Plans, and Engagement; and Enrollment Services & Vetting Programs. Their responsibilities include:

- Intelligence and Analysis (I&A) identifies and mitigates threats to the transportation system by leading intelligence activities and conducting 24/7 vetting operations to inform and support U.S. transportation security stakeholders.

- Requirements and Capabilities Analysis (RCA) strengthens TSA's operational capabilities by analyzing the domestic and international risk landscape, assessing capability gaps to develop user requirements, driving optimal performance through innovation, and testing emerging transportation security technologies.

- Policy, Plans, and Engagement (PPE) develops and coordinates domestic and international multimodal transportation security programs, directives, strategies and initiatives, while overseeing engagement with industry stakeholders and multilateral organizations.

- Enrollment Services & Vetting Programs (ESVP) manages TSA's enrollment, vetting, and credentialing programs; ensures end-to-end program management and oversight of technology, operations, and resources supporting TSA's security threat assessment programs; and aligns TSA's enrollment and vetting initiatives with the larger DHS enterprise.

TSA's operations are intelligence-driven and risk-informed. As a result, work performed by OS is integral to all TSA activities and is extremely collaborative in nature. For example, I&A and RCA provide threat intelligence and risk assessments that inform security policies and procedures developed by PPE and ESVP. These policies and procedures are then operationalized by Enterprise Support (ES), to develop TSA's training programs, and Security Operations and Law Enforcement/Federal Air Marshal Service to implement them.

In addition, RCA establishes detection standards and equipment requirements that directly inform actions of Enterprise Support to acquire, deploy, and maintain our transportation security equipment and technology. RCA also coordinates with our International Operations

team in Security Operations to harmonize detection standards and testing methodologies to expand TSA's efforts to strengthen transportation security around the globe.

Additionally, ESVP ensures a robust network of enrollment locations across the United States for individuals to apply for TSA PreCheck, a Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC), and a Hazardous Materials Endorsement (HME). ESVP also leads efforts to successfully implement strengthened identity management requirements in the REAL ID Act, working closely with Domestic Aviation Operations in Security Operations to ensure travelers are REAL ID ready. Finally, every day, results of I&A's vetting of passengers helps inform Security Operation's domestic screening activities and LE/FAMS coverage.

Security Operations

Security Operations (SO) is led by EAA Melanie Harvey and is the Agency's most visible, operational arm. SO is responsible for security screening at nearly 440 domestic airports, regulatory compliance in all modes of transportation, and ensuring security of flights inbound to the United States from over 300 international airports. More than 51,000 TSA frontline employees serve in SO, working 24/7/365, across the globe, to protect people and secure transportation.

The SO workforce is comprised of Transportation Security Officers (TSOs), Lead TSOs, Supervisory TSOs, Explosive Detection Canine Handlers, Transportation Security Specialists in Explosives, Transportation Security Managers, Transportation Security Inspectors, TSA Representatives (TSARs), and support staff.

In 2023, SO conducted the physical screening of more than 858 million passengers (averaging over 2.2 million per day), 484 million checked bags, and 1.9 billion carry-on items. Security Operations prevented individuals from bringing 6,737 firearms into the secure areas of

the airport and onboard aircraft, of which 93 percent were loaded. Internationally, 27 TSARs, five regional operations centers, and over 50 Transportation Security Specialists work with our foreign partners to strengthen international transportation security.

There are five offices under Security Operations: Domestic Aviation Operations, International Operations, Operations Management, Surface Operations, and Compliance. Their responsibilities include:

- Domestic Aviation Operations manages TSA's security operations at approximately 440 domestic airports, including the security screening checkpoint, checked baggage screening, and air cargo screening.

- International Operations manages TSA's work with our foreign partners to raise the international aviation security baseline by analyzing potential vulnerabilities and threats to drive action to mitigate potential attacks.

- Operations Management oversees Security Operation's budget, the Screening Partnership Program, and the National Deployment Force. Additionally, it provides support services to all Security Operations employees, which includes human resources, logistical support, staffing allocation, emergency preparedness, and standards and directives for the frontline workforce.

- Surface Operations leads TSA's work on surface transportation security including pipeline, highway and motor carrier, mass transit, passenger rail, and freight rail transportation systems. They accomplish this through planning, developing, and implementing strategic, risk-based security programs and activities intended to enhance preparedness and minimize vulnerabilities to reduce the risk of a terrorist attack on a surface transportation asset.

- Compliance, comprised of Transportation Security Inspectors and Transportation Security Specialists, ensures that domestic and international transportation industry entities carry out a broad range of statutory, regulatory, and program security requirements.

SO works collaboratively with every TSA pillar. For example, SO works closely with Operations Support on the creation of policy, testing of emerging technology, monitoring, and reporting current intelligence threats, and conducting vetting operations of passengers prior to arrival at security screening checkpoints or as they transition from an international port of arrival. SO works closely with Enterprise Support to develop training for our frontline workforce, Human Capital policies, and deployment and support of Transportation Security Equipment. SO also collaborates with LE/FAMS at both headquarters and in the field and assists the FAMS with mitigation of insider threats and screening of high-risk passengers.

Enterprise Support

Enterprise Support (ES) is led by EAA Julie Scanlon and is responsible for delivering a wide array of critical support services and capabilities necessary for TSA to meet its mission. With a focus on making TSA an employer of choice, ES fully supports TSA's mission through unparalleled training, thoughtful human capital programs and practices, and cutting-edge technology. ES also ensures TSA is continuously improving employee morale through accountability, employee empowerment, transparent communication, and fostering an inclusive and collaborative environment where diversity of experience and thought are embraced.

ES has over 1,700 employees and is comprised of the offices of Acquisition Program Management, Contracting and Procurement, Human Capital, Information Technology,

Operations Management, Security and Administrative Services, and Training and Development. Their responsibilities include:

- Acquisition Program Management builds TSA's capabilities by managing the acquisition, testing, deployment, and sustainment of security technology and other acquisition programs.

- Contracting & Procurement acquires and maintains TSA's required services, supplies, and technologies by negotiating and awarding procurements and other contractual agreements necessary to support the transportation security mission.

- Human Capital provides strategic, sustainable, and comprehensive programs and services that attract, build, and inspire a talented workforce through positive customer engagements.

- Information Technology provides transformative technology solutions through information technology, information assurance, and information management to secure and safeguard the nation's transportation systems.

- Operations Management provides strategic and tactical leadership, direction, management, and support services to ES employees and programs in the areas of budgetary and financial management, human resource management, and business operations.

- Security and Administrative Services (SAS) delivers agile and effective security and safety services, and strategic, streamlined property and real estate services and solutions.

- Training and Development creates, delivers, and oversees training for all TSA employees including Transportation Security Officers; Federal Air Marshals;

management, administrative and professional employees; canine teams; instructors; inspectors; and other specialists.

Collaboration is critical for ES to understand customer needs and successfully develop, deliver, and maintain solutions. For example, ES collaborates with Operations Support to transition requirements into solutions. This occurs through a partnership between Acquisition Program Management and RCA to manage TSA's acquisition lifecycle framework, allowing for faster deployment of solutions to the field, fostering capability growth in technology innovation, and maintaining equipment performance in the field. ES also collaborates extensively with Security Operations and LE/FAMS, on recruitment and hiring, training, and various administrative services to ensure our frontline workforce is equipped to perform its mission.

Law Enforcement/Federal Air Marshal Service

LE/FAMS is led by EAA Brian Belcher and is responsible for conducting protection, response, detection, and assessment activities in the transportation system. In furtherance of their core mission and based on risk analysis and intelligence, Federal Air Marshals deploy on security missions onboard U.S. commercial aircraft worldwide and can deploy in response to emergent law enforcement requirements. Federal Air Marshals are trained to take decisive action surrounding incidents in the transportation domain and are prepared to appropriately respond to a variety of situations within aircraft cabin, airport, and surface transportation environments.

In June 2023, TSA published the LE/FAMS Roadmap, which was developed with stakeholder input. The LE/FAMS Roadmap lays out the mission, vision, and priorities of LE/FAMS in its role as the principal federal law enforcement organization with the Nation's transportation system. It contains a strategic vision for LE/FAMS focusing on strengthening

transportation security by providing greater organizational flexibility, improving operational capabilities, and enabling a more proactive response to future transportation and national security events. The Roadmap outlines LE/FAMS' priorities of fostering leadership, innovation, technology, and training to strengthen detection, assessment, and response capacities around its core mission of in-flight security.

LE/FAMS is composed of three divisions: Field Operations, Flight Operations, and Operations Management. Responsibilities include:

- The Field Operations Division provides direction, leadership, and supervision to twenty Federal Air Marshal Service Field Offices established across the country, ensuring policy and procedures are carried out as intended. Additionally, it is responsible for developing, fostering, and administering programs to include the Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response (VIPR) program, which deploys uniformed Federal Air Marshals throughout the transportation domain in collaboration with local stakeholders.

- The Flight Operations Division is responsible for deployment of Federal Air Marshals on aircraft; daily operational incident management; domain awareness through management of the Transportation Security Operations Center; and management of Federal Air Marshals assigned to multiple federal law enforcement task forces. Additionally, it manages various flight programs which oversee armed security officer training, builds agency expertise for mitigating risk from unmanned aircraft systems, provides training and subject matter expertise for vulnerability and risk assessments within the transportation sector, and hosts the TSA Insider Threat Program.

- The Operations Management Division is responsible for providing leadership, management, and support services to LE/FAMS headquarters, field programs, and employees in the areas of budget and finance, human resources, logistics, staffing, policy coordination, and organizational performance measures.

Furthermore, LE/FAMS manages the Federal Flight Deck Officer Program and Crew Member Self-Defense Training Program. Under the Federal Flight Deck Officer Program, TSA deputizes qualified volunteer pilots and flight crewmembers of passenger and cargo aircraft as law enforcement officers to defend the flight deck of aircraft against acts of criminal violence or air piracy. The Crew Member Self-Defense Training Program provides training to airline crew members that consists of the same self-defense principles taught to Federal Air Marshals and Federal Flight Deck Officers. Techniques learned in the Crew Member Self-Defense Training Program aid crew members in defending themselves should they encounter an in-flight situation.

As an integral part of TSA's layered security, LE/FAMS works collaboratively with other TSA pillars on a daily basis to successfully carry out its mission. For example, LE/FAMS relies upon Intelligence & Analysis to inform its risk-based scheduling methodology, prioritizing deployments of Federal Air Marshals on flights with the highest risk passengers; works in collaboration with Security Operations to enhance security throughout airports and surface environments and address field-based emergent and evolving national security priorities; and works in partnership with Enterprise Support on various ways to develop and support the LE/FAMS workforce to meet TSA's mission.

TSA's Collaborative Success and Achievements

By driving integration across the organization, TSA's 2018 realignment and evolution promotes cohesion, collaboration, innovation, and flexibility, enabling the Agency to better

achieve its transportation security mission and strategic priorities. While TSA is made up of different offices, programs, and responsibilities, we work closely together to achieve our collective mission. Three examples of TSA's collaborative success include implementation of TSA's new pay plan, cybersecurity, and our response to rising passenger volumes.

Increased Pay for the TSA Workforce

Attrition among TSA's frontline workforce reached a peak of nearly 20 percent per year in 2018 and 2019, due in large part to a compensation plan that resulted in employees receiving an average of 30 percent less than other federal employees. Recognizing that no agency can function efficiently with such high turnover, TSA's top priority became increasing employee pay to ensure pay is commensurate with federal government counterparts. Appropriately compensating all TSA employees is essential to improving recruitment, retention, morale, and the employee experience and is fundamental to ensuring transportation security. Thanks to the support of Congress, the *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023* provided initial funding to place all non-executive TSA employees on a compensation system commensurate with their federal government counterparts.

To successfully implement TSA's new compensation system, Enterprise Support took the lead working with all pillars to establish policy, provide training, and process thousands of associated personnel actions. ES equipped each program office and airport to issue over 62,000 forecast letters to TSA employees with their new salary upon the onset of the plan. Leveraging Chief Financial Officer and Resource Management Offices across the Agency, these critical letters were created based on the team's development of a TSA employee master pay file, which included current pay, projected new pay, and the next scheduled pay increase. Local Human

Resource specialists around the country went line-by-line reviewing every letter to ensure accuracy.

The letters were delivered in April 2023, to the entire TSA workforce, with an accuracy rate of over 99 percent (fewer than 100 employees needed adjustments). Success was directly due to team collaboration and tireless work verifying the accuracy of each case.

TSA's new compensation system has a direct impact on TSA's ability to accomplish our mission. We have seen a rise in retention, recruiting, and hiring. TSA's attrition dropped from nearly 20 percent to about 11 percent. With improved employee retention, TSA is able to be more selective in hiring, moving from needing to hire over 11,000 TSOs in 2018 to only needing to hire 9,000 TSOs in 2023 to keep up with attrition and increased passenger volumes. Furthermore, as reflected in TSA's 2023 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) scores, implementation of TSA's new compensation plan improved the Agency's morale and overall employee satisfaction.

Cybersecurity

The transportation sector is facing a growing prevalence of cyber threats from nation-states, cyber criminals, terrorist groups, and hacktivists. These adversaries aim to exploit cyber vulnerabilities within the transportation sector to cause economic harm and/or to disrupt, destroy, or interfere with delivery of essential goods and services. A rise in criminal and nation-state cyber threats necessitated an increased focus on the cybersecurity of transportation systems and TSA's organizational pillars collaborate closely to respond to these cyber threats.

In 2018, TSA published its Cybersecurity Roadmap, which aims to guide our collective efforts to prioritize cybersecurity measures within TSA and the transportation system. The Cybersecurity Roadmap defines clear pathways to integrate and improve TSA's cybersecurity

posture, safeguard the nation's transportation systems, and build TSA's capacity to meet the ever-changing cybersecurity environment through smart investments and collaborative partnerships.

Following extensive collaboration with federal partners, engagement with industry, and feedback from stakeholders, TSA issued cybersecurity requirements for airport and aircraft operators, pipelines, and railroad carriers as part of DHS's efforts to increase cybersecurity resilience of U.S. critical infrastructure. These require TSA-regulated entities to develop and take measures to improve their cybersecurity resilience and prevent disruption and degradation to infrastructure. Regulations are performance-based and variable according to the risk profile and capability of the entity.

Through various policy initiatives and in consultation with industry partners, Operations Support led the development of these requirements. Security Operations established the Security Operations Cybersecurity Inspection Teams to assist regulated parties in developing and implementing plans responsive to new cybersecurity requirements. Enterprise Support drove significant hiring and training initiatives required to form and support teams working with industry partners. By working across organizational pillars, TSA increased the number of employees dedicated to cybersecurity in units responsible for intelligence, risk analysis, policy development, and compliance. TSA is actively collaborating with the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency to execute both voluntary and regulatory initiatives to enhance cybersecurity resilience of transportation systems. TSA continues to issue non-regulatory guidance and training assistance for all modes of transportation to enhance preparedness and reduce risks associated with cyberattacks.

Increased Passenger Volume

Impacts of TSA's realignment, improved organizational effectiveness, and constant collaboration is evident as TSA responds to changes in passenger volume. Over the last four years, TSA experienced significant fluctuations in passenger volumes – from record lows observed during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, to record highs last year. Throughout this period, TSA worked collaboratively to rapidly respond to changing passenger volume by adjusting our staffing, procedures, and transportation security equipment and technology, leveraging TSA's new organizational structure to great effect.

Nowhere is the effectiveness and agility of this structure more apparent than in our response to passenger volume changes during COVID-19 and their subsequent post-COVID-19 rise in passenger volumes. Increased risk to TSA's frontline workforce during COVID-19 required TSA to re-evaluate our capabilities and training, while ensuring the frontline workforce was able to safely provide effective security. With Operations Support's help, subject matter experts in risk, policy, and traveler vetting, Security Operations rapidly evaluated the changing risk environment and responded with agility.

While COVID-19 significantly reduced passenger volume across the country, it also imposed new barriers to customer communication and experience, impacted staffing, and created urgent procurement and acquisition requirements. Working in close partnership with Enterprise Support, Security Operations accelerated delivery of newly designed training to counter pandemic risks to TSA's frontline workforce and deployed Plexiglas screens, signage, and personal protective equipment. All these efforts protected the traveling public, TSA's frontline workforce, and our industry partners.

Today TSA is faced with unprecedented passenger volumes in the opposite direction. Seven of our top 10 busiest days of all time were in 2023 and we expect to see over three million passengers on a single day at some point this year. Security Operations continues to work together with TSA's other pillars to plan, design, develop, procure, test, validate, and execute a whole host of innovative solutions in response to rising passenger volumes. Despite the numbers, TSA's ability to reliably count on experts from purpose-built organizational pillars, continues to provide effective security and resilience across the nation's transportation system.

Conclusion

More than 20 years after TSA's urgent creation in the wake of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States, TSA has emerged as an agile security agency that works with our interagency, state and local, international, and industry partners to outmatch dynamic threats to the transportation system. This evolving threat environment emphasizes the importance of intelligence sharing and domain awareness to facilitate rapid threat warning, timely deployment of protection measures, coordination of security resources, and activation of responders.

While it is impossible to predict every threat TSA will face in the future, our organization is prepared to address emerging threats with agility, high domain awareness, and decisive action. TSA is proud of our evolution and our workforce who made this progress possible while serving our country every day with integrity, commitment, and respect.

We appreciate this Subcommittee's ongoing interest in and support of TSA's critical national security mission. We look forward to continuing to work with you to help ensure TSA remains an effective and agile force in the face of emerging threats to our transportation system. Chairman Gimenez, Ranking Member Thanedar, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you

for the opportunity to appear before you today. My colleagues and I look forward to your

questions.