



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Statement of Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson**

***TSA's Efforts to Fix Its Poor Customer Service Reputation and Become a Leaner, Smarter Agency***

June 7, 2012 (Washington) – Today, Committee on Homeland Security Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) delivered the following prepared remarks for the Transportation Security subcommittee hearing entitled “TSA’s Efforts to Fix Its Poor Customer Service Reputation and Become a Leaner, Smarter Agency”:

“Administrator Pistole, let me start by commending you for your decision, over a year ago, to grant collective bargaining rights to the Transportation Security Officers at TSA. As proven by the performance of other federal security officers, collective bargaining does not diminish our security. Collective bargaining can improve workforce morale and productivity, and this will positively impact TSA’s ability to fulfill its mission to secure our transportation systems.

It is important for all of us not to forget that TSOs are the frontline defense in aviation security. Therefore, we must ensure that these workers are not only properly trained, but are afforded appropriate workplace protections.

TSA has come a long way since it was established in 2001. Efforts to improve TSO morale will lead to increased capacity and professionalism in their ranks and enhance security. As you know, Administrator Pistole, I have called on you to commit to reaching an agreement on a contract and renew that call today.

I would also like to take this opportunity to note the Administrator’s progress on efforts made to improve screening at checkpoint procedures, even though we have yet to pass an authorization bill for TSA in the House during the 112th Congress.

Although TSA faces many operational challenges, it has also made progress on initiatives that are aimed at supporting its mission. However, as the authorizing Committee for TSA, it is our duty to produce legislation that ensures proper funding levels and sets forth critical programs in Federal law.

Finally, I would like to point out that TSA has not provided a plan for TWIC renewal. I would encourage you to move forward with a plan that would enable those workers who must have TWIC cards to renew them without incurring a fee.”

# # #

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Please contact Adam Comis at (202) 225-9978

**United States House of Representatives**  
Committee on Homeland Security

H2-117, Ford House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515  
Phone: (202) 226-2616 | Fax: (202) 226-4499

<http://chsdemocrats.house.gov>