

***Floor Statement of Rep. Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)
For Consideration of H.R. 6028***

September 11, 2012

I rise in support of H.R. 6028, the “*No-Hassle Flying Act of 2012*,” and yield myself such time as I may consume. While I support the legislation we are considering today, I am concerned that on this, the anniversary of the terrorist attacks of September 11th, we are not considering a bipartisan package of legislation.

On this day, eleven years ago, our country was attacked and came together like to never before to face the immense challenge of rebuilding and restructuring our security systems. With the creation of the 9/11 Commission, the Transportation Security Administration and ultimately the Department of Homeland Security, we demonstrated that homeland security is an American issue, not a partisan one.

Why then, I must ask, are we not considering a bipartisan package of legislative proposals that have previously received the unanimous support of the Committee on Homeland Security? Why is this bill, which never received Committee consideration, being put on the House floor ahead of H.R. 1165, the “*Transportation Security Administration Ombudsman Act*”? That bill, introduced by Representative Jackson-Lee, received the unanimous support of the Committee on Homeland Security. Despite that, it has sat idle on the Union Calendar for over 10 months?

Why are we not considering H.R. 6328, a thoughtful proposal introduced by Representative Hochul that would require TSA to transfer unclaimed clothing found at security checkpoints to veterans in need?

With the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan that were fought in the aftermath of 9/11 over and coming to an end, respectively, I could think of no more appropriate legislation for this body to consider today than a bill aimed at supporting our veterans.

I support the bill we are considering today because it is a common sense proposal that will make air travel more convenient for a select few and has the potential to enhance efficiencies. Where we can eliminate duplicative screening without compromising security, I will lend my support. Accordingly, I support this legislation that the Obama Administration proposed and the gentleman from Illinois, Representative Walsh, introduced.

On this day, above all others, we turn our thoughts to those who were lost in the tragic events of 9/11.

It is unfortunate that the House has missed the opportunity today to consider non-controversial homeland security legislation introduced by both Democrats and Republicans thus showing that on 9/11, we put partisan politics aside and focus on doing the right thing.

Before closing I would like to extend my congratulations to the gentleman from Illinois, Representative Walsh, for having bills on the House floor for the first time today.

I suspect that he is as surprised and I am that one of his first bills to reach the floor was proposed to Congress by the Obama Administration.

With that I urge passage of this proposal from the Obama Administration and yield back the balance of my time.