



One Hundred Thirteenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20515

April 2, 2013

Admiral Papp
Commandant
United States Coast Guard
2100 Second Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20593-0001

Dear Admiral Papp,

We are writing to request an extension of the notice and comment period for the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) Reader Requirement Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) and to request additional public meetings to ensure robust participation in the rulemaking process by TWIC stakeholders. Given the impact of this program on the operations of ports, vessels, and other critical infrastructure is enormous, we expect stakeholders from around the country would want to participate in the rulemaking process.

The SAFE Port Act of 2006 required issuance of the final TWIC reader rule within two years after the start of the TWIC reader pilot.¹ The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) initiated the pilot program in August 2008, making the final TWIC reader regulation due in August 2010. The Coast Guard has announced that the comment period for the TWIC reader rule will close on May 21, 2013, and only one public hearing, in Arlington, VA, will take place. While we recognize that the Coast Guard is more than two and half years behind schedule, a short notice and comment period for NPRM and limited public hearings are not the answer. In fact, during the notice and comment period for the TWIC implementation NPRM in 2006, TSA and the Coast Guard received approximately 1,770 written comments and approximately 1,200 people attended four public meetings throughout the United States.

The comments and concerns expressed during the TWIC reader NPRM process will effect over 2.4 million current TWIC holders and is an important component of the Coast Guard's multi-layered system of access control requirements and other measures designed to enhance maritime security. We believe it is imperative that the Coast Guard ensures

¹ Pub. L. No 109-347 § 104(k)(3).

sufficient time and opportunity for comments and concerns from TWIC stakeholders to be shared. Therefore, we request the notice and comment period for the TWIC reader NPRM be extended by at least 90 days and additional public meetings be held in geographically diverse maritime areas with significant TWIC-holder populations.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Rosaline Cohen, Chief Counsel for Legislation for the House Committee on Homeland Security, Democratic Staff at (202) 226-2616.

Sincerely,



Bennie G. Thompson
Bennie G. Thompson
Ranking Member



Sheila Jackson Lee
Sheila Jackson Lee
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Border and Maritime