



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement of Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)
Raising the Standard: DHS's Efforts to Improve Aviation Security
Around the Globe

Subcommittee on Transportation & Protective Security
September 26, 2017

Earlier this month, we commemorated the anniversary of the September 11th terrorist attacks. Unfortunately, 16 years after the attacks, terrorist threats to transportation systems both abroad and at home remain.

Last month, we saw the threat to cargo security when Australians connected to ISIS were arrested in connection with attempting to place an explosive on an international flight. Less than two weeks ago, we saw the threat to rail and public transportation systems when a bomb partially detonated on the London Underground.

We know that terrorist networks often encourage attacks overseas to be mirrored in the United States, and just this summer, Inspire magazine called for attacks against U.S. rail systems. Persistent threats to transportation systems make clear that we must remain vigilant and build on the significant transportation security improvements made by the Obama Administration.

I look forward to hearing testimony from GAO and TSA about the progress made over the last decade to improve foreign airport assessments and air carrier inspections and their recommendations for further enhancements.

I also look forward to hearing from CBP about the future of its Preclearance program. The Obama Administration recognized the security benefit of having our CBP officers overseas to screen U.S.-bound passengers and expanded the program for the first time in decades. I hope to hear about the status of negotiations initiated under the prior Administration to expand the program.

Additionally, I have real questions about whether President Trump—with his preoccupation with banning travelers from Muslim-majority countries and building a Border Wall—will continue efforts to expand Preclearance and implement other meaningful aviation security measures.

I also have serious questions about the newest misguided travel ban announced this

week and its potential detrimental effects to our Nation's security and our American values.

In closing, I want to recognize the frontline officers working every day to keep the American people safe. Their hard work and dedication allows our security systems to operate effectively and we thank them for their service to our country.

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