



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

November 15, 2011

John S. Pistole
Administrator
Transportation Security Administration
601 S. 12th Street
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Administrator Pistole,

We are writing to request that the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) provide extensions to transportation and port workers who, starting in October 2012, would be required to shoulder the administrative and financial burden of renewing their Transportation Worker Identification Credentials (TWIC) to continue working in our Nation's ports.¹

As you know, the SAFE Port Act of 2006² required the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to issue final regulations by April 2011 that set forth technical requirements for TWIC biometric readers to allow unescorted access to secure areas of the ports.³ Given that DHS has not met this statutory deadline, our Nation's maritime environment has not realized the full security promise of this biometric program. Accordingly, we do not believe that there is an adequate justification to begin requiring the more than 1.9 million longshoremen, truckers, merchant mariners, and rail and vessel crew members to incur additional costs to attain renewals. Specifically, we do not believe that these workers should be required to take time out of their busy days and pay an additional \$132.50 to attain new cards when DHS has not fulfilled its statutory responsibility to issue a final regulation for TWIC readers.

Given our views on this matter, we were encouraged by your testimony last week before the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation in which you acknowledged that "the intent of Congress has not been completed to provide the best possible security at the ports" and indicated that you are open to modifying the renewal timeline for TWIC cardholders.⁴ As the lead sponsor and cosponsors of H.R. 1105, the "Transitioning With an Improved Credential Program Act," we look forward to working with you to help ensure that transportation and port workers are not forced to

¹ 49 C.F.R. § 1572.23 (2011).

² Pub. L. No. 109-347.

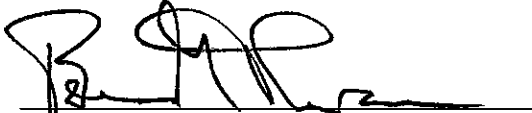
³ The SAFE Port Act of 2006 required the Secretary of Homeland Security to commence a pilot within 180 days of enactment of the Act, which would have been April 2007; however the TWIC reader pilots did not begin until April 2009. The Act also required TWIC reader regulations to be issued within two years of the commencement of the pilots, which would have been April of 2011. 46 U.S.C.A. § 70105(k)(1) & (3) (2010).

⁴ Rob Margetta, *Pistole Questioned on TWIC, Airport Screening*, CQ Homeland Security, Nov. 9, 2011.


incur unnecessary new burdens, when the TWIC program is not in operation in our Nation's ports in accordance with the Safe Ports Act.

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.

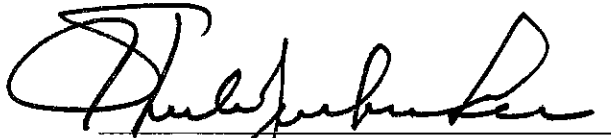
Sincerely,




Bennie G. Thompson
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security



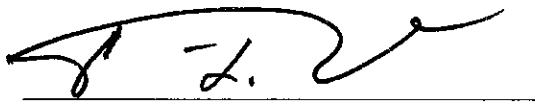
Loretta Sanchez
Member
Committee on Homeland Security



Shelia Jackson Lee
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation Security



Henry Cuellar
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security



Cedric Richmond
Member
Committee on Homeland Security