



Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

December 15, 2005

Mr. Kip Hawley
Director
Transportation Security Administration
601 South 12th Street
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Director Hawley:

We have been informed of the 232 Full Time Equivalent reduction in TSA security screening personnel at Miami International Airport (MIA) and are writing to urge you to reconsider this re-alignment at one of highest security risk airports in the nation. Until early 2004, TSA's passenger and baggage screening operations at MIA were understaffed, causing congestion at security checkpoints and complicating the agency's mandate of conducting electronic screening of 100% of checked baggage.

Forced to address the compliance issue, TSA dramatically increased staff in 2004 by more than 400 screeners, and just recently, reallocated an additional 47 full time positions to MIA, raising the authorized complement of security screeners at MIA to 1,698. TSA has recently been effectively handling the high volume of unique and unusual baggage coming through MIA and the security checkpoints congestion is manageable, but MIA cannot afford to lose any screener staff, particularly since the TSA has a high attrition rate of about 20 screeners per month at MIA.

On another issue, we would like to thank you for your assistance in executing the \$20 million Other Transaction Account (OTA) agreement for reimbursement of terminal modification costs associated with the in-line Explosives Detection Systems (EDS) installation at Miami International Airport (MIA). The Miami-Dade Aviation Department (MDAD) is currently building two new terminals and will incur approximately \$132 million in terminal modification costs associated with the in-line EDS installation.

As stated, TSA at MIA achieved its 100% electronic checked baggage compliance mandate in early 2004, and EDS installation in the new terminals will help TSA to continue to effectively deploy personnel and other resources in order to maintain this compliance. TSA's continued and timely reimbursement of terminal modification costs associated with EDS installation at MIA is essential. Additionally, MDAD is investing \$14 million in passenger security checkpoint

improvements required to meet TSA standards and continues to seek reimbursement for this expense.

Also, in terms of improving passenger processing at MIA, MDAD is looking forward to TSA implementing the Registered Traveler program at MIA and is standing by to formally apply for this program once TSA develops guidelines for the application process.

Finally, we understand that TSA's Federal Security Director at MIA, Rick Thomas, has been doing a wonderful job in managing resources and directing operations at MIA. We understand MDAD has an excellent working relationship with him, and we hope that you will be able to provide the aforementioned staffing resources and EDS terminal modification funds in order to maintain safe and secure operations at MIA.

Sincerely,



Kendrick B. Meek
Member of Congress



Heana Ros-Lehtinen
Member of Congress



Lincoln Diaz-Balart
Member of Congress



Mario Diaz-Balart
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress