

July 14, 2011

The Honorable Mary Landrieu
Chairman
Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee
431 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dan Coats
Ranking Member
Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee
B40E Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Landrieu and Ranking Member Coats:

On behalf of the managers and supervisors at the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), whose interests are represented by the Federal Managers Association (FMA), I urge to you provide adequate funding for the agency as you debate fiscal year 2012 appropriations for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Specifically, I ask that you reject an amendment offered by Congressman John Mica (R-Fl.) and passed by the House of Representatives which limits funding for TSA screener personnel, compensation and benefits to no more than \$2.76 billion, a decrease of \$270 million over FY11.

Cutting TSA funding by hundreds of millions of dollars equates to a loss of 5,000 – 8,000 security personnel, both employees and management, at a time when airport security is scrutinized by the public and Congress alike on a daily basis. As it stands now, most airports around the country are understaffed in terms of security personnel. The Newark Liberty International Airport, for example, is currently short-staffed by over two hundred security screeners.

TSA airport screeners have been compared to Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) employees and Secret Service agents for the similar work they do in ensuring our nation's security. As much as these employees perform inherently governmental work, so do our TSA airport screeners. The funding cut proposed by Representative Mica was the first step in moving towards privatization of airport security, a move the Congressman has been upfront about. Given the challenges facing our country, now is not the time to decrease funding nor remove an inherently governmental function crucial to national security. Reducing the number of airport screeners instead of filling the gaps necessary to secure our airports is the wrong course of action for our country.

As you consider FY12 funding for the Transportation Security Administration, I respectfully ask that you provide the agency with the tools necessary to keep our airports safe. Thank you for your time and consideration of our views. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact FMA's Government Affairs Director Jessica Klement at jklement@fedmanagers.org or (703) 683-8700.

Sincerely,



Patricia Niehaus
National President