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**Before the**  
**Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation**  
**United States Senate**  
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Good afternoon, Chairman Rockefeller, Ranking Member Hutchison, and distinguished Members of the Committee. I am honored to appear before you and this Committee for the first time since my confirmation as the Assistant Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) for the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

I appreciate the vote of confidence you gave me in June when you reported my nomination favorably from the Committee. I look forward to our dialogue today and your thoughts about how we can improve transportation security.

Before sharing with you my priorities for leading TSA through the next stage of its development as it matures into a truly high-performance, world-class organization, I want to update you on our efforts to address recent, serious threats to transportation, to our fellow citizens, and to our economy.

**Air Cargo Packages from Yemen**

Almost three weeks ago, the global counterterrorism community disrupted a potential attack when individuals in Yemen with ties to al Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula attempted to conceal and ship explosive devices in cargo on board aircraft that traveled through several foreign nations, and ultimately was bound for the United States.

This episode began on the evening of October 28 with a call I received from John Brennan, the President's top counterterrorism advisor, informing me of a credible terrorist threat. Later that evening, President Obama directed U.S. intelligence and law enforcement agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security, to take steps to ensure the safety and security of the American people, and to determine whether these threats were part of any additional terrorist plots.

We worked through the night, the next day, and the following weekend, staying in close contact both with our colleagues within the U.S. government and with our international partners and key allies. TSA and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) immediately took additional measures to enhance existing protocols for screening inbound cargo, including temporarily grounding all packages originating from Yemen destined for the United States. With constant communication and sharing of information, we were able to disrupt this plot before it did any harm.

After the initial response, we took a number of additional steps. In the days immediately following the attempted plot, at the direction of President Obama and Secretary Janet Napolitano, we deployed a team of security inspectors to Yemen to provide assistance and guidance to the Government of Yemen with their cargo screening procedures. I leveraged a previously planned trip to speak to the Aviation Security (AVSEC) World Conference in Germany to interact directly with my counterparts from Europe and elsewhere, as well as International Air Transport Association (IATA) Director General Giovanni Bisignani and Jim Marriott of the International Civil Aviation Organization, about the common transportation security threats we all face, and the common and cooperative actions we could take to address security vulnerabilities.

To get a firsthand view of the challenges we face, from Germany I flew to Yemen to receive briefings from, and express my gratitude to, the TSA inspectors we deployed there. I also met with Yemen Deputy Prime Minister Rashad al-Alimi, and government officials from Yemen's Directorate General of Civil Aviation and Ministry of Interior to discuss the threat with them. In addition, I spoke with our new U.S. Ambassador to Yemen, Gerald M. Feierstein, a seasoned specialist in Near East and South Asian Affairs who has served overseas in eight postings, and as a senior official in the State Department's Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism. These on-the-ground meetings with TSA staff and key government officials provide crucial context as we work to understand how to best address possible vulnerabilities within the transportation system.

Our collective actions to address cargo security continued as Secretary Napolitano spoke on November 2 with leaders of the international shipping industry, including UPS, DHL, FedEx, and TNT, about enhancing air cargo security. During the call, Secretary Napolitano underscored her commitment to partnering with the shipping industry to strengthen cargo security through enhanced screening and preventative measures, including terrorism awareness training for shipping industry personnel.

Following her call with shipping industry leaders, Secretary Napolitano spoke with IATA Director General Bisignani about the Department's continued collaboration with our private sector partners and international allies to secure the global supply chain through a layered security approach that is designed to identify, deter, and disrupt threats. The Secretary also

reiterated her commitment to ongoing coordination with the airline and shipping industries to uphold TSA security standards, including the vetting of personnel with access to cargo, employee training, and cargo screening procedures.

Security of the air cargo supply chain is critical, and we are developing security enhancements in close coordination with industry because we understand the value of air cargo to our country's economy. Together, FedEx, UPS, DHL, and TNT employ more than one million employees around the world, and own or operate more than 1700 aircraft. Each of these companies has operations in more than 200 countries. In 2008, air merchandise trade comprised almost 30 percent of U.S. exports by value, totaling almost \$390 billion, and almost 20 percent of U.S. imports by value, totaling over \$417 billion. Combined, that represents more than \$800 billion of U.S.-international merchandise trade.

As we continue to address the threat to air cargo, we are analyzing information and gathering intelligence on the packages intercepted from Yemen, and we have issued additional directives to the airline industry on the non-acceptance, or extra screening, of high-risk packages on passenger and cargo flights. Specifically, on November 8, Secretary Napolitano announced that:

- the ban on air cargo from Yemen will continue and has been extended to all air cargo from Somalia;
- no high-risk cargo will be allowed on passenger aircraft;
- toner and ink cartridges weighing 16 ounces or more will be prohibited on passenger aircraft in both carry-on bags and checked bags on domestic and international passenger flights inbound to the United States, as well as certain inbound international air cargo shipments; and
- all cargo identified as high risk will go through additional and enhanced screening, including inbound international mail packages, which must be screened individually and certified to have come from an established postal shipper.

With our colleagues at CBP, we are working collaboratively with industry and our international partners to expedite the receipt of cargo manifests for international flights to the United States prior to departure in order to more effectively identify and pre-screen items based on risk and current intelligence. We are also working with our international and private sector partners on the expansion of layered detection systems, including technology and other measures, to find ways to strengthen security that also maintain the critical flows of global commerce that are so important to our economic recovery. We will keep you informed of our progress.

### **Threats to Mass Transit**

Another recent case highlights the importance of mass transit security. On October 27, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) arrested a Pakistan-born naturalized U.S. citizen for attempting to assist others whom he believed to be members of al Qaida in planning multiple bombings at Metrorail stations in the Washington, D.C., area. During a sting operation,

Farooque Ahmed allegedly conducted surveillance of the Arlington National Cemetery, Courthouse, and Pentagon City Metro stations, indicated that he would travel overseas for jihad, and agreed to donate \$10,000 to terrorist causes. A federal grand jury in Alexandria, Virginia, returned a three-count indictment against Ahmed, charging him with attempting to provide material support to a designated terrorist organization, collecting information to assist in planning a terrorist attack on a transit facility, and attempting to provide material support to help carry out multiple bombings to cause mass casualties at D.C.-area Metrorail stations.

While the public was never in danger, Ahmed's intentions provide a reminder of the terrorist attacks on other mass transit systems: Madrid in March 2004, London in July 2005, and Moscow earlier this year. Our ability to protect mass transit and other surface transportation venues from evolving threats of terrorism requires us to explore ways to improve the partnerships between TSA and state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement, and other mass transit stakeholders. These partnerships include measures such as Visible Intermodal Prevention and Response (VIPR) teams we have put in place with the support of the Congress. As Secretary Napolitano stated in her speech at the International Association of Chiefs of Police Annual Conference just two days before Ahmed's arrest, "Today's threats put state, local, tribal and territorial law enforcement around the country on the front lines of our counterterrorism effort in unprecedented ways." We are expanding our outreach and coordination with these frontline law enforcement entities to better protect vital transportation assets.

### **Priorities for TSA**

In addition to dealing with these recent serious threats, I have been very busy in my new position. I came to TSA after more than 26 years at the FBI – a time that included playing a role in the United States' investigation and response to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. That experience has informed my priorities as TSA Administrator.

Our enemies are observant, patient, stealthy, and ruthless. They constantly evolve their methods and tools – and it is our job to stay ahead of them. My job is to lead TSA through the next stage in its development as this young agency matures into a high-performance, world-class organization. To defeat our enemies, we have to do our job better and smarter, and reshape our security approach so everyone recognizes what it is: one part of a continuum that comprises the national security mission of the United States.

To make that happen, I have three basic priorities at TSA. I want to:

- improve TSA's counterterrorism focus through intelligence and cutting-edge technology;
- support the TSA workforce; and
- strengthen TSA's relationships with stakeholders and the traveling public.

All of these priorities are interconnected and are vital to TSA's mission.

Improving TSA's Counterterrorism Focus Through Intelligence and Cutting-Edge Technology.

A key lesson I took from 9/11 and from my years at the FBI is that one of the best tools we possess in our effort to combat terrorism is accurate and timely intelligence. It is with this in mind that I begin my day at TSA with an intelligence briefing with my senior staff – we are constantly honing our counterterrorism focus by working with DHS and our federal partners to better operationalize this intelligence. The importance of accurate and timely intelligence has consistently been validated in my tenure at TSA to date.

For example, through better watchlisting capabilities and the implementation of our Secure Flight program, we continue to improve our efforts to prevent known or suspected terrorists from boarding flights. Under Secure Flight, TSA uses name, date of birth, and gender to vet airline passengers against terrorist watch lists up to 72 hours before those passengers are permitted to board planes. Passengers who are potential watch list matches are immediately identified for appropriate notifications and coordination.

Secure Flight vets 100 percent of passengers flying on U.S. airlines domestically and internationally, as well as passengers on many foreign airlines, and we are working hard toward fully implementing the program for remaining covered foreign air carriers by the end of 2010. Secure Flight currently vets over 99 percent of all airline passenger travel to, from, and within the U.S. I particularly would like to thank this Committee for the strong support that you have provided to TSA and Secure Flight to enable us to reach this stage.

Even the best intelligence, however, does not always identify in advance every individual who would seek to do us harm. So we also rely on the security expertise of our frontline personnel – Transportation Security Officers (TSOs), Federal Air Marshals, explosive specialists, and Behavior Detection Officers, among others – to help prevent terrorists from harming Americans.

That reliance means that valuable intelligence must be distributed widely and rapidly to the field. One way we are improving this process is through the extension of secret-level security clearances to a greater number of TSA employees. This change significantly enhances TSA's ability to leverage the best intelligence and elevate our security practices across the board.

In addition to the improved use of intelligence, effective technology also is an essential component of our arsenal to detect and deter threats against our nation's transportation systems. TSA is deploying a range of next generation equipment – bottled liquid scanners, Advanced Technology X-Ray systems, and Explosive Trace Detection (ETD) units – to enhance our efforts.

On December 25, 2009, Northwest Airlines Flight 253 passenger Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab tried and failed to detonate concealed explosives. This event illustrates the fact that despite

decades of advances in screening and significant reforms following 9/11, our global security network still faces an ever-evolving threat. Currently, the most effective technology for detecting small threat items concealed on passengers, such as explosives used by Abdulmutallab, is Advanced Imaging Technology (AIT). AIT safely and effectively screens passengers for both metallic and non-metallic threats, including weapons and explosives, without physical contact. As of today, TSA has deployed 385 AIT machines to 68 airports nationwide, and our goal is to have nearly 1,000 AIT machines deployed by the end of calendar year 2011.

While we are rapidly deploying AIT machines, we also are exploring enhancements to it, such as Automated Target Recognition (ATR), or auto-detection software. This capability would make screening more efficient and would eliminate most privacy concerns about the technology. Ongoing ATR testing is designed to ensure effective detection with minimal false alarms.

While AIT has an important role in the future of aviation security, it is just one of the technologies we are exploring. For example, we also are working on long-term, technology-based solutions for screening liquids, aerosols, and gels that will distinguish between materials that present a threat and those that do not. In addition, we currently have dozens of qualified technologies for use in air cargo screening and are working with DHS and our industry partners to develop new technologies.

New technology provides only part of the picture for the future of checkpoint screening. It is important that we continue to discuss what the future holds, but the outlines are clear: new technologies must be developed that can be assimilated into an airport environment and rapidly identify and respond to emerging threats. The DHS Science and Technology Directorate, TSA, the Department of Energy, and the National Laboratories are working closely together to accelerate our ability to move to that future checkpoint.

New technology platforms should be capable of being upgraded with additional functionality as they are developed, including functionality developed by those who did not manufacture the original equipment. We seek screening equipment solutions that provide both better performance and a better screening experience for the public. The bottom line is that future screening solutions must focus on providing the best possible security for travelers in a targeted, intelligence-driven way that provides greater scrutiny to those who need greater scrutiny, and not using the same approach for everybody.

Supporting the TSA Workforce. An intelligence-driven agency using sophisticated technological tools to root out terrorists and deter potential attacks will not succeed without a professional, highly trained, fully engaged, and respected workforce. As I stated above, the men and women of TSA are on the front line in detecting and defeating the terrorist threat. Since becoming the Administrator for TSA, I have logged thousands of miles to meet with them. I

have been impressed by their professionalism, work ethic, and enthusiasm. I have listened carefully to their suggestions on improving operations and opportunities, and have learned from their insights. I also have challenged them to hold themselves to the highest standards of hard work, professionalism, and integrity that already are intrinsic parts of TSA's fabric.

I also am working to hone the workforce development strategy and to develop an environment of continuous learning for TSA employees that will help them meet both individual and organizational goals. As we continue to implement new technology to meet emerging threats, TSA routinely evaluates, updates, and upgrades its technical training curriculum. Over the next few months, technical training priorities include an update to procedures at the passenger screening checkpoint and support for the deployment of new technologies such as Advanced Imaging Technology. Over the next few years, our technical training portfolio will expand and enhance individual and team performance through the introduction of an assortment of skills and knowledge building courses, delivered using a variety of techniques.

We are also working on improving the training for the Transportation Security Inspector (TSI) workforce. Along with revision of the TSI Basic Course on multi-modal training, we are developing and delivering additional courses targeted to specific transportation modes. TSA also recently expanded the Surface Transportation Training Center located in Pueblo, Colorado, which I visited in July. This is an impressive facility that is significantly improving the training we are able to provide.

Through these efforts, we are finding opportunities to integrate elements that not only enhance technical skills, but also contribute to the professional development of the TSA workforce.

In addition, we are engaged in efforts to address and resolve workplace issues. The Ombudsman at TSA is one of many avenues through which TSA employees may raise workplace issues and concerns to see them resolved. As I travel around the country meeting with employees, I have invited employees to raise issues and concerns to me directly, and I have learned that many employees also place great value in established communications channels, such as the National Advisory Council, the Idea Factory, and local Employee Advisory Councils. Nevertheless, I also know from my experience at the FBI that an effective Ombudsman program is a valuable resource for unfiltered, candid feedback on the state of the workplace environment, and I am committed to its advisory role to me and the rest of the TSA leadership team.

Strengthening TSA's Relationships with Stakeholders and the Traveling Public. Supporting and improving our commitment to our workforce will help TSA function better internally. But as an organization with millions of interactions with the public every day, we also need to deepen and broaden our relationships with our government colleagues both here and abroad, with transportation and related stakeholders, and with the traveling public.

This already has been a landmark year for improving security through collaboration. We are working to take it to the next level.

Following the attempted December 25 terrorist attack, at the President's direction and led by Secretary Napolitano, the United States engaged governments around the world at five regional summits on five continents, in a renewed effort to strengthen international aviation security. The International Air Transport Association and the Airports Council International engaged the world's aviation industry to complement this significant effort. This impressive showing of global cooperation reminded us that aviation security is a shared responsibility. We all face a similar threat environment that evolves as quickly as we can develop mitigation measures. To improve security, we have to continue to work together. It is through information sharing, development of best practices, and continual evaluation of risk that we will, together, as one community, continue to mitigate the threat.

In working to thwart the air cargo plot, our excellent relationships with our overseas counterparts were crucial. In early October, before the cargo plot emerged, Secretary Napolitano and I attended the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Assembly in Montreal with our partners from the Department of Transportation and the Federal Aviation Administration. At that meeting we built on our excellent working relationships with our colleagues from other countries and discussed our joint efforts to strengthen the global aviation system. For me, it was the first opportunity to meet many of these foreign leaders, and these contacts already have proven to be invaluable. After the cargo plot emerged, I worked with these foreign colleagues quickly and efficiently, and saw a number of them when I was at the AVSEC conference in Germany.

In the spirit of our commitment to engage the international community, last week the United States hosted an "Advanced Imaging Technology Policy Summit" to continue the discussions around AIT. Approximately 30 countries attended and discussed a wide range of policy questions, including deployment strategy, safety, privacy, legal issues, and checkpoint configuration.

The cargo plot also illustrates our need to strengthen the relationships we have with our private sector partners and stakeholders; we cannot do effective security without their proactive partnership and collaboration. Our collaboration with the world's major air cargo companies has been outstanding, and we are continuing to build that relationship and those with other private sector partners.

Our nation's security also is a shared responsibility with our neighbors and our colleagues in U.S. government agencies. So we are encouraging our citizens, our communities, and our transportation security and law enforcement partners across the United States to remain vigilant and continue to build a national culture of preparedness and resiliency. As you know, Secretary



Napolitano has launched an expanding “If You See Something, Say Something” public awareness campaign. This simple and effective program was started by the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority to raise public awareness of indicators of terrorism, crime, and other threats and to emphasize the importance of reporting suspicious activity to the proper transportation and law enforcement authorities. I have joined Secretary Napolitano in three separate events to partner with transportation sectors in the “If You See Something, Say Something” campaign – we met with Amtrak during a multi-stop train tour through New York City, Newark, N.J., Philadelphia, and Washington in early July, and with the general aviation community at Oshkosh in late July. Earlier this week, Secretary Napolitano and I launched the campaign at airports in the National Capital Region.

### **Conclusion**

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee today to speak with you about recent threats and TSA’s ongoing efforts to ensure the safety and security of the transportation domain. I look forward to your questions.