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SECURING AMERICA'S TRANSPORTATION AND MARITIME SYSTEMS: A REVIEW OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2021 BUDGET REQUESTS FOR THE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION AND THE U.S. COAST GUARD

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND MARITIME SECURITY

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

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SECURING AMERICA'S TRANSPORTATION AND MARITIME SYSTEMS: A REVIEW OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2021 BUDGET REQUESTS FOR THE TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION AND THE U.S. COAST GUARD

Wednesday, March 11, 2020

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND MARITIME SECURITY,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:04 a.m., in room 1334, Longworth House Office Building, Hon. J. Correa (Chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Correa, Barragán, Lesko, Bishop, and Van Drew.

Mr. CORREA. Good morning, everyone.

The Subcommittee on Transportation and Maritime Security will now come to order. The committee is meeting today to receive testimony on the President's fiscal 2021 budget request for the Transportation Security Administration, or TSA, and the U.S. Coast Guard.

I want to recognize myself for an opening statement.

I want to thank the administrator and the commandant for appearing before the subcommittee today. Thank you, gentlemen.

Homeland Security is our top priority, and the TSA and the Coast Guard are critical components in providing that security. I am concerned that, under the President's budget proposal, our Homeland Security professionals will not be appropriately resourced and empowered to meet the security challenges of the day.

Currently, we are dealing with a public health crisis caused by the novel coronavirus. As the Government responds to this crisis, I worry that TSA and the Coast Guard will struggle to protect their front line work force while they carry out their security missions.

Each day, TSA or TSO officers are interacting with thousands of passengers traveling from all over the world, and just this morning, we got a report that TSA has 3 of their members exposed in San Jose. So, Mr. Pekoske, if we can likely hear your response to this issue in your comments.

In the same way, the Coast Guard personnel interact regularly with foreign nationals and international travelers while they per-

form law enforcement functions and search-and-rescue operations as well.

This budget asks men and women of TSA and the Coast Guard to do more with less, and redirects desperately needed funds to the President's misguided plans to build a wall on the Southern Border.

TSA, for example, is proposing to cut important security programs that Congress has deemed critical. These cuts include eliminating VIPR teams that provide security at airports and mass transit hubs, as well as eliminating TSA staffing at airport exit lanes, and funding for airport law enforcement through the Law Enforcement Officers Reimbursement program.

The administration is proposing a hiring freeze of 1,100 full-time employees, a cap that maybe now makes sense in light of the unexpected downturn in travel that has developed over the last few days.

The budgets also fails to request resources needed to address the major security challenges that the administration will create if it follows through with its plans to enforce the REAL ID compliance at TSA checkpoints beginning on October 1, 2020.

If DHS follows through with the October 1 REAL ID deadline, millions of passengers, I am afraid to say, will not be allowed through TSA checkpoints. The challenges that could result are crowded public areas and long lines at screening checkpoints Nation-wide, this creating other security challenges at our airports. DHS admits that only 35 percent of Americans have REAL ID cards at this time.

The disruption at airports will cripple operations and the travel industry, leaving the work force to deal with the backlash from angry passengers. Throughout its existence, TSA has struggled with low morale and high attrition among its front-line work force.

Thankfully, this budget does include a proposal to begin to provide regular salary increases to TSOs. I appreciate that TSA is recognizing the need to prioritize TSO pay and career progression issues this committee has been emphasizing for many years. I want to commend the administrator for developing this proposal for regular salary increases, but it does not go far enough. Without statutory change, salary increases will be subject to the whims of the annual budget process.

This budget proposal also fails to increase the starting salaries of new TSOs, provide basic civil service protections available to other Government workers, both issues that will be covered and are covered under the Chairman Thompson's bill, the Rights for TSO Act, which the White House passed—which—I am sorry—this House has passed this last week.

If the President is serious about wanting to provide the front-line TSA work force the support you desperately need, we should withdraw—the President should withdraw his threat to veto this landmark legislation and urge the Senate to pass it.

When it comes to the Coast Guard, the President's budget proposal is also not much better. No one is more resource-constrained than the Coast Guard. With its 11 statutory missions, the least funded among the military branches—and I am honored by the service and the commitment of the people of the Coast Guard to al-

ways rise to the challenge to meet their mission. However, no organization can run indefinitely without adequate resources and support, and we are already seeing the effects today.

The long-term failure to adequately fund the Coast Guard fleet sufficiently leaves us with a shortage of assets to carry our Coast Guard operations. For example, the Coast Guard does not have enough icebreakers and will not receive its first polar security cutter until 2024. While this budget includes funding for a second polar security cutter, it makes no attempt whatsoever to address the Coast Guard's $2 billion backlog of shore infrastructure maintenance and recapitalization projects.

A lack of strategic funding endangers our National security, and without the necessary assets and infrastructure, the Coast Guard will be unable to address the majority of known threats. I will give you an example. The Coast Guard has estimated that it knows of about 80 percent of the maritime drug movements, yet you can only target 20 percent of those movements for interdiction because of constraints in your resources. Despite these constraints, the Coast Guard continues to lead all Federal agencies in seizing more cocaine than all these other Federal agencies combined.

The President has stated that preventing drugs from entering our country is a priority for the administration, and, if the President wants to stop drugs from coming across our borders, he should fully fund the Coast Guard instead of redirecting military funds to build an antiquated border wall.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today about their important work in their agencies and the support they need to protect the homeland and ensure the security of all Americans.

[The statement of Chairman Correa follows:]

STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN J. LUIS CORREA

MARCH 11, 2020

Currently, we are dealing with the public health crisis caused by the novel coronavirus. As the Government responds and strives to limit the spread of the virus, I worry that TSA and the Coast Guard will struggle to protect their frontline workforces while they carry out their security missions.

Last night, TSA announced that 3 officers at San Jose International Airport have tested positive for COVID–19. Our thoughts go out to them, and we wish them a speedy recovery.

They are among the 46,000 brave Transportation Security Officers, TSOs, who are continuing to show up to work during this crisis and who are interacting with thousands of passengers traveling from all over the world.

Similarly, Coast Guard personnel interact regularly with foreign nationals and international travelers while they perform law enforcement functions and search-and-rescue operations. We must make sure the workforces of both agencies are kept as safe as possible, and that they are able to receive appropriate health care benefits.

Turning to today's topic, this budget proposal asks the men and women of TSA and the Coast Guard to go on doing more with less and redirects desperately needed funding to the President's misguided plans for a wall at the Southern Border. TSA, for example, is proposing cuts to important security programs that Congress has already made clear are unacceptable. These cuts include eliminating VIPR teams that provide security at airports and mass transit hubs, as well as eliminating TSA staffing of airport exit lanes and funding for airport law enforcement through the Law Enforcement Officer Reimbursement Program.

The administration also proposes a hiring freeze of 1,100 full-time employees—a cap on staffing that only makes sense now in light of the unexpected travel downturn that has developed over the past few days. The budget also fails to request resources needed to address the major security vulnerabilities the administration will

create if it follows through with its plans to enforce REAL ID compliance at TSA checkpoints starting October 1, 2020.

If DHS follows through with those plans, millions of passengers who have not obtained a REAL ID-compliant identification will not be allowed through a TSA checkpoint. This change could result in crowded public areas and long lines at screening checkpoints Nation-wide. DHS estimates only 35 percent of Americans have REAL ID cards.

The disruption at airports could cripple operations and the travel industry—and leave the workforce to deal with the backlash from angry passengers. Throughout its existence, TSA has struggled with low morale and high attrition among its front-line workforce.

Thankfully, this budget does include a proposal to begin providing regular salary increases to TSOs.

I appreciate that TSA is recognizing the need to prioritize TSO pay and career progression—issues this committee has been emphasizing for many years.

I commend the administrator for developing this proposal for regular salary increases, but it does not go far enough. Without a change to the statute, salary increases will be subject to the whims of the annual budgeting process.

The budget proposal also fails to increase the starting salaries for new TSOs or provide basic civil service protections available to other Government workers—both issues which would be covered under Chairman Thompson's bill, the Rights for TSOs Act, which the House passed last week.

If the President is serious about wanting to provide the front-line TSA workforce the support it desperately needs, he should withdraw his threat to veto this landmark legislation and urge the Senate to pass it. When it comes to supporting the Coast Guard, the President's budget proposal is not much better.

No one is more resource-constrained than the Coast Guard, with its 11 statutory missions and the least funding among military branches. I am honored by the service and commitment of the people of the Coast Guard, who always rise to the challenge and meet their mission.

However, no organization can run indefinitely without adequate resources and support. We are already seeing the effects today. The long-term failure to adequately fund the Coast Guard fleet sufficiently leaves us with a shortage of assets to carry out Coast Guard operations. For example, the Coast Guard does not have enough icebreakers and will not receive the first Polar Security Cutter until 2024.

While this budget includes funding for a second Polar Security Cutter, it makes no attempt whatsoever to address the Coast Guard's $2 billion backlog of shore infrastructure maintenance and recapitalization projects. A lack of strategic funding endangers our National security, as without the necessary assets and infrastructure the Coast Guard is unable to address the majority of known threats.

For example, the Coast Guard has estimated that it knows about 80 percent of maritime drug movements but can only target 20 percent of those movements for interdiction because of resource constraints. Despite those constraints, the Coast Guard continues to lead Federal agencies in seizing more cocaine than all other Federal agencies combined.

The President has stated that preventing drugs from entering the country is a priority for this administration. If he wants to stop drugs from coming across our borders, he should fully fund the Coast Guard, instead of redirecting military funds to build an antiquated border wall.

Mr. CORREA. With that, I now recognize our Ranking Member, our gentlelady from Arizona, Mrs. Lesko, who has walked in right on time.

Mrs. LESKO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for waiting for me. First, I had pastors in my office praying for me, so I was, like, OK, I can't miss that.

Mr. CORREA. They could pray for all of us.

Mrs. LESKO. Yes. Well, I am sure they are. Then I walked over to the Homeland Security Committee meeting room, and there was no one there, so here we are.

All right. Well——

Mr. CORREA. We have been here.

Mrs. LESKO. I know. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased that the subcommittee is meeting today to discuss the President's fiscal year 2021 budget request, which outlines the administration's

priorities relating to the Transportation Security Administration and the United States Coast Guard.

As authorizers, it is incumbent upon the subcommittee to examine the President's request, and I look forward to hearing from Admiral Schultz and Administrator Pekoske on how the proposed 2021 budget supports their respective agencies' homeland security missions.

The United States Coast Guard faces an incredibly broad mission act, serving as part of the U.S. Armed Forces and intelligence community, while also acting as a law enforcement entity, regulator, and first responder.

One of the greatest budgetary challenges facing the Coast Guard is the need to achieve mission readiness in the face of increasing demands. As we have seen through our oversight hearings and briefings on the Coast Guard's drug and migrant interdiction efforts, disaster response missions, and the homeland security implications of a dynamic Arctic region, the service faces ever-broadening challenges.

I am pleased that the President's budget request addresses several of these challenges, including an overall budgetary increase of $142 million over the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. Additionally, the budget includes necessary funding requests to construct a second polar security cutter, post-delivery activities for National security cutters, construction of an additional offshore patrol cutter, as well as funding for new waterway commerce cutters. The budget also addresses growing cybersecurity threats facing internal Coast Guard systems, as well as the maritime transportation stakeholders.

These funding priorities are of important National security interests to the United States.

I look forward to hearing the Commandant address questions related to keeping some of these high-profile procurements on track and efforts to respond to the litany of threats facing our maritime interests.

As for the TSA, the President's budget proposal is $58 million less than funding appropriated by Congress in fiscal year 2020. The budget proposal unfortunately reduces funding to important transportation security programs, including the Federal Flight Deck Officers and Law Enforcement Reimbursable Agreement.

It is unfortunate to see the budget request continue to target these programs year after year, even after Congress passed the TSA Modernization Act, which explicitly authorized funding for law enforcement reimbursements and prioritize new investments for Federal flight deck officers.

Moreover, I am concerned that the fiscal year 2021 request reduces funding for procurement, impacting purchases of important technologies, like computed tomography machines, checked baggage screening machines, and credential authentication technology. These investments have been heavily supported by Congress on a bipartisan basis because they make significant improvements to aviation security and mitigate specific threats to the traveling public.

Last, I hope to hear from Administrator Pekoske on how TSA is prepared for the upcoming enforcement of the REAL ID require-

ments at airport checkpoints and how TSA can support travelers once the October 1 deadline arrives.

Both the Coast Guard and TSA sit on the front lines of protecting the free movement of people and goods, and driving a strong American economy. I thank both of our witnesses, and I truly do, for all of your hard work, for appearing before the subcommittee today, and I look forward to hearing your testimony.

Thank you.

Mr. Chair, I yield back.

[The statement of Ranking Member Lesko follows:]

STATEMENT OF RANKING MEMBER DEBBIE LESKO

MARCH 11, 2020

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased that the subcommittee is meeting today to discuss the President's fiscal year 2021 budget request, which outlines the administration's priorities relating to the Transportation Security Administration and the United States Coast Guard.

As authorizers, it is incumbent upon this subcommittee to examine the President's request, and I look forward to hearing from Admiral Schultz and Administrator Pekoske on how the proposed 2021 budget supports their respective agencies' homeland security missions.

The United States Coast Guard faces an incredibly broad mission set, serving as part of the U.S. Armed Forces and intelligence community, while also acting as a law enforcement entity, regulator, and first responder. One of the greatest budgetary challenges facing the Coast Guard is the need to achieve mission readiness in the face of increasing demands. As we have seen through our oversight hearings and briefings on the Coast Guard's drug and migrant interdiction efforts, disaster response missions, and the homeland security implications of a dynamic Arctic region, the service faces ever-broadening challenges.

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The budget also addresses growing cybersecurity threats facing internal Coast Guard systems, as well as maritime transportation stakeholders. These funding priorities are of important National security interest to the United States. I look forward to hearing the commandant address questions related to keeping some of these high-profile procurements on track and efforts to respond to the litany of threats facing our maritime interests.

As for TSA, the President's budget proposal is $58 million less than funding appropriated by Congress in fiscal year 2020. The budget proposal unfortunately reduces funding to important transportation security programs, including Federal Flight Deck Officers and Law Enforcement Reimbursable Agreements. It is unfortunate to see the budget request continue to target these programs year after year, even after Congress passed the TSA Modernization Act, which explicitly authorized funding for law enforcement reimbursements and prioritized new investments for Federal Flight Deck Officers.

Moreover, I am concerned that the fiscal year 2021 request significantly reduces funding for procurement, impacting purchases of important technologies like Computed Tomography machines, checked baggage screening machines, and Credential Authentication Technology. These investments have been heavily supported by Congress on a bipartisan basis because they make significant improvements to aviation security and mitigate specific threats to the traveling public.

Last, I hope to hear from Administrator Pekoske on how TSA is preparing for the upcoming enforcement of REAL ID requirements at airport checkpoints and how TSA can support travelers once the October 1 deadline arrives.

Both the Coast Guard and TSA sit on the front lines of protecting the free movement of people and goods and driving a strong American economy. I thank both of our witnesses for appearing before the subcommittee today, and I look forward to hearing your testimony. Thank you, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CORREA. Thank you, Ms. Lesko.

Other Members of the committee are reminded that, under the rules of the committee, opening statements may be submitted for the record, and I want to welcome our first panel of witnesses.

[The statement of Chairman Thompson follows:]

STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN BENNIE G. THOMPSON

MARCH 11, 2020

Thank you to Chairman Correa and Ranking Member Lesko for holding today's hearing on examining the President's fiscal year 2021 budget request for the Transportation Security Administration and the U.S. Coast Guard.

I would also like to thank Administrator Pekoske and Commandant Schultz for appearing before the subcommittee today.

TSA and the Coast Guard both execute missions critical to homeland security.

Unfortunately, the President's budget proposal undercuts the mission of these critical agencies.

The budget does not adequately fund nor address major morale and retention problems within TSA's front-line workforce.

Last year, the DHS inspector general released a report which found that TSA faced major challenges in retaining Transportation Security Officers (TSOs) and that, over a 2-year span in 2016 and 2017, 1 in 3 TSOs quit.

I applaud TSA's initiatives in this year's budget to increase the pay for high-skilled TSOs and provide annual pay increases for service longevity—but they do not go far enough.

This budget does nothing to address TSOs' lack of basic workplace protections that have been granted to workers in other Federal agencies.

Last week, the House passed my bill, H.R. 1140, the "Rights for Transportation Security Officers Act of 2020," which guarantees basic rights for all TSA employees by moving them to Title 5.

I look forward to working with the Senate to ensure its passage and working with the administrator to ensure the rights of all TSA employees are protected.

TSA's budget dramatically reduces its plans to procure new Computed Topography machines, which greatly enhance the screening of carry-on bags.

TSA's Capital Investment Plan calls for procurement of approximately 400 CT machines per year through fiscal year 2024—yet astoundingly, this year's budget only proposes funding for 30 units.

Since the administrator has previously highlighted this technology as one of the most critical tools to countering current threats to aviation, I find the omission of adequate funding in the budget alarming.

The President's budget request also proposes a staffing cut of 1,110 full-time equivalent employees, the elimination of exit lane staffing and the VIPR Program—TSA's main operational resource for surface transportation security—and elimination of the Law Enforcement Officer Reimbursement Program, which supports placing uniformed officers near screening checkpoints in over 300 airports Nationwide.

Many of these cuts have been present in each of the President's previous budget proposals, and Congress has repeatedly rejected them.

The Trump administration should be focused on bolstering Federal support for such programs, not eliminating them in favor of funding for an unnecessary border wall.

Let us stop this political charade and work together to ensure our Nation's transportation systems are secure.

Equally important to the discussion of our Nation's homeland security are efforts to secure our maritime interests.

The U.S. Coast Guard carries out critical homeland security missions including maritime law enforcement, drug and migrant interdictions, port security, and the protection of U.S. security and sovereignty throughout the world's waters.

With such a vast footprint and mission, the U.S. Coast Guard workforce is under constant pressure—and yet, like the TSA workforce, the Coast Guard workforce constantly delivers for the American people.

Over the last 2 fiscal years, Congress has made significant investments in modernizing Coast Guard assets, including funds to make the Coast Guard's acquisition of a new Polar Security Cutter possible.

This year's budget seeks funding for a second new Polar Security Cutter as well as National Security Cutters which the Coast Guard needs to keep our Nation's coastlines safe.

These investments, however, do not fully compensate for years of deferred maintenance and recapitalization of the Coast Guard's fleet and shore infrastructure.

A February 2019 report by the Government Accountability Office found that about 45 percent of the Coast Guard's shore infrastructure is beyond its service life, and current backlogs of maintenance and recapitalization projects will cost at least $2.6 billion to address.

The fiscal year 2021 budget request provides only $75 million for shore infrastructure projects, which would not begin to address the backlog.

This is unacceptable.

Given the pace of climate change and continually rising sea levels, failure to begin addressing the backlog of shore infrastructure projects could prove catastrophic and extremely costly over the coming years.

In addition to its shore infrastructure backlog, the Coast Guard faces challenges in upgrading and maintaining its IT infrastructure.

The fiscal year 2021 budget provides approximately $24 million to enhance the Coast Guard's IT infrastructure, which represents only a small fraction of the annual IT backlog the Coast Guard faces and does little to ensure Coast Guard personnel are connected.

Coast Guard personnel must have reliable access to modern, secure IT systems to do to their jobs and protect the American people.

Finally, I want to turn to personnel matters and workforce retention issues within the Coast Guard.

The Coast Guard has struggled to recruit and retain woman and minorities.

This committee has expressed concerns about the about the lack of racial, gender, and regional diversity within the Coast Guard and the Coast Guard Academy, and about the Coast Guard's efforts to address bullying, harassment, and whistleblower retaliation.

This committee and the Committee on Oversight and Reform investigated these issues for more than 18 months and found major deficiencies in the Coast Guard's policies for investigating allegations of harassment and bullying.

In a staff report released in December regarding the investigation, the committees outlined 7 recommendations, which, if implemented will greatly strengthen the Coast Guard's ability to respond to these incidents.

Throughout the investigation, I was disappointed by the Coast Guard's responsiveness to requests for information and by the Commandant's decision not testify in person at our hearing about these issues in December.

I am heartened, however, by a recent letter from the Commandant admitting that our investigation identified deficiencies within the service and expressing an intent to our staff report's recommendations.

The service needs become more inclusive, diverse, and equitable to ensure it reflects the public it serves and protects its personnel.

I look forward to working with you and your staff to ensure the recommendations are implemented in a timely manner.

Again, I thank the Chairman for holding today's hearing and the witnesses for their participation.

Mr. CORREA. Without objection, the witnesses' full statements will be inserted into the record.

Our first witness, Mr. David Pekoske, has served as the seventh administrator of the TSA since August 2017. Before joining TSA, Administrator Pekoske most notably served as the 26th Vice Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard. As the Vice Commandant, Mr. Pekoske was second in command, also serving as the chief operating officer and component acquisition executive of the U.S. Coast Guard.

Mr. Pekoske, welcome. You may summarize your statements in 5 minutes. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF DAVID P. PEKOSKE, ADMINISTRATOR, TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

Mr. PEKOSKE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and, Chairman Correa, Ranking Member Lesko, and distinguished Members of the subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you this

morning to discuss the President's fiscal year 2021 budget request for TSA.

I thank all of you and your staffs for your long-standing strong support of aviation and surface transportation security. It is a distinct privilege for me to lead the 64,000 men and women who perform our critical mission with excellence each and every day.

This includes our screening work force, the largest and most visible part of TSA, as well as others on the front line, to include our Federal air marshals; our K–9 teams; our inspectors, both domestic and international, air and surface; our vetting staffs; and my representatives at embassies around the world. They are all enabled by outstanding support, policy, and legal staff throughout the agency.

The President's request provides important new support to our screening work force. This includes, for the first time ever, funding for service, or longevity, pay. The budget provides for annual increases of up to 2 percent to recognize experience and years of service.

It also includes the next phase of incentives to encourage and recognize career progression by providing a 3 percent pay raise for those officers who acquire advanced alarm resolution skills. I ask for your support of these critical pay initiatives for our transportation security officers.

It is very important that we continue to refresh the technology at our screening checkpoints in the nearly 440 Federalized airports across the country. We need to put the best technology in the hands of our outstanding people.

Thank you for your support of two key on-going programs. This budget continues investment in the deployment of CT, in credential authentication technology, at the checkpoint. We are in the process of fielding the initial 300 machines funded by Congress with computed tomography technology.

This represents a significant improvement in our ability to detect prohibited items in carry-on baggage and eliminates the requirement for passengers to remove electronics from their bags. As many of you have witnessed, it provides greatly improved imaging for our officers. This will have a significant positive impact on checkpoint effectiveness. The fiscal 2021 request continues the CT program as we work toward the next contract that will include integrated automated screening lanes.

The credential authentication technology improves our ability to validate the authenticity of drivers' licenses, passports, and other forms of acceptable ID presented by passengers. In addition, it provides near-real time data from our secure flight system that will ensure passengers receive the appropriate level of screening.

This CAT technology is better and faster than the manual validation it replaces, and it complements the enforcement of the REAL ID Act pertaining to air travel that is scheduled to begin on October 1 of 2020, just under 7 months from now.

REAL ID is critical for security, improving the reliability and accuracy of State-issued drivers' licenses. This prevents and deters terrorists' ability to use fraudulent documents.

Thank you for your support of both of these critical acquisitions. Once complete, our checkpoints will be much more effective and efficient, and our officers will have better tools to screen passengers.

Finally, with respect to checkpoint operations, I am pleased to announce that our TSA PreCheck enrollments just crossed the 10 million passenger threshold. This is a key milestone that exceeds the TSA Modernization Act requirement to have 10 million passengers enrolled by October 1.

The Modernization Act's many provisions further strengthen transportation security. The majority of the 180 requirements in the act have been implemented, and I appreciate the excellent engagement we have had with your staff in working aggressively on implementation.

One of the provisions of the act established the Surface Transportation Security Advisory Committee. This committee is fully formed, has met 3 times, and is off to a very good start, and it is an outstanding complement to the aviation security advisory committee.

I am also pleased to report that the regulations on surface transportation security training are with the *Federal Register* for publication. This was an important goal both for this subcommittee and for TSA.

I know you have questions on coronavirus. Supporting the President's task force to protect the United States from coronavirus has been our top priority. I appreciate the cooperation of carriers in airports in this effort. My entire leadership team has worked tirelessly to ensure our work force is protected, and we have followed the guidance provided by the CDC and OSHA. Both the Department and TSA have extensively messaged the work force to ensure everyone has the latest information.

As you know, 3 of our TSOs at San Jose International Airport have tested positive for COVID–19. They are receiving medical care, and we are closely monitoring their status. We have identified their coworkers that have sustained contact with them within the past 14 days and placed those individuals on weather and safety leave until the 14-day window closes.

We have thoroughly disinfected the work site as well, and we are working closely with the airport and public health officials, and we have immediately provided public notice of this situation.

Let me close by thanking you for your strong support of the men and women of TSA, and I look forward to your questions.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Pekoske follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID P. PEKOSKE

MARCH 11, 2020

Good morning Chairman Correa, Ranking Member Lesko, and distinguished Members of the subcommittee. Thank you for inviting me to testify on the President's fiscal year 2021 budget request, which includes an $8.24 billion request for the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). I am honored to be here and grateful for the long-standing and constructive relationship that TSA enjoys with this subcommittee.

TSA was established by the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (ATSA) in the wake of the September 11 attacks. The world has changed since then, but our fundamental mission, to protect the Nation's transportation systems to ensure free-

dom of movement for people and commerce, has not. To that end, as it relates to the current National response to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID–19) outbreak, TSA is supporting the President's Task Force by exercising its authority under ATSA to limit who may board commercial aircraft destined for the United States. We are also working tirelessly to ensure our work force is safe and following the guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Occupational Safety and Health Administration to reduce the chance of infection.

While we remain steadfast in providing the highest level of security for the United States across all modes of transportation, the scope and complexity of that goal has increased over the last 2 decades. Today, the U.S. transportation systems accommodate approximately 965 million domestic and international aviation passengers per year; over 5.3 billion passengers traveling on both transit and over-the-road buses each year; more than 10.1 billion passenger trips on mass transit per year; 26 million students daily on school buses; and nearly 900,000 chemical shipments every day on trucks. Our interconnected transportation system and infrastructure includes approximately 440 Federalized airports; 126,000 miles of railroad tracks; 4.2 million miles of highway; 615,000 highway bridges; 473 road tunnels; and 2.5 million miles of pipeline.

Since TSA's creation, the modes and methods of terrorist attacks have become more decentralized and opportunistic than ever before. Aviation and transport hubs, however, remain highly-valued targets. Our adversaries are watching us, studying our vulnerabilities, and working hard to formulate new attack strategies to replace those that have failed. The daily threat environment TSA faces in the aviation, surface, and cybersecurity realms is persistent, pervasive, and constantly evolving. To meet the challenge created by such adversaries, we must innovate, deploy new solutions rapidly and effectively, and maximize the impact of our resources.

Our continuing vision is to be an agile security agency, embodied by a professional work force that engages its partners and the American people to outmatch a dynamic threat. To that end, in April 2018, I issued the 2018–2026 TSA Strategy, which established 3 strategic priorities to guide the agency's work force through its 25th Anniversary: Improve Security and Safeguard the Transportation System; Accelerate Action; and Commit to Our People. I subsequently published my Administrator's Intent delineating short- and medium-term objectives for the first 3 years to achieve those priorities.

Further empowering TSA to execute its mission, serve as a global leader in transportation, and become an employer of choice, the TSA Modernization Act of 2018, the agency's first comprehensive reauthorization since inception, was enacted in October 2018. The TSA Modernization Act authorized funding for fiscal years 2019, 2020, and 2021; enhanced organizational structures, operations, and processes; and established a 5-year term for the administrator—a critically important factor for ensuring organizational stability and setting and achieving longer-term agency goals.

As I come before you today, slightly more than halfway through my term as administrator and at a point where we are developing the next version of the Administrator's Intent, I want to thank Congress for the authorities provided to TSA through the TSA Modernization Act. Currently, TSA has completed more than 80 percent of the Act's requirements with deadlines. Consistent with the TSA Modernization Act, TSA elevated Headquarters leadership positions associated with Surface Transportation Security, Air Cargo Security, and Trusted and Registered Traveler Programs; established a Surface Transportation Security Advisory Committee and Domestic Explosives Detection Canine Breeding Workgroup to provide stakeholder input on critically important issues; and initiated pilot programs associated with the use of Computed Tomography units for the screening of air cargo and evaluating exit lane technology. TSA also conducted vulnerability and risk assessments of the surface transportation systems and stakeholder surveys that will inform risk-based budgeting and resource allocation.

In short, I want to express my gratitude for the authorities and appropriations provided to TSA that have enabled us to execute our mission and make significant progress on a number of strategic priorities. Additionally, I want to use this opportunity to convey both what we have accomplished and our future goals and objectives. In fiscal year 2019, we——

- Screened approximately 839 million aviation passengers (with a peak volume of 2.8 million passengers in 1 day), representing a 4.3 percent checkpoint volume increase from fiscal year 2018;
- Screened 1.9 billion carry-on items and more than 510 million checked bags;
- Procured 300 Computed Tomography (CT) units and began preparation for the Nation-wide deployment of CT systems; and
- Conducted 1,693 air carrier inspections at foreign airports, 144 foreign airport assessments, 60 pipeline critical facility security reviews, 107 assessments of

mass transit operator security enhancements, and 182 assessments of security enhancements by motor carriers;

The fiscal year 2021 President's budget continues to support TSA's strategy to improve security and safeguard the Nation's transportation system, accelerate action, and reinforce TSA's commitment to its people. It supports $3.5 billion for our Transportation Security Officers (TSOs) at the Nation's airports. We thank Congress for the continued support you've provided for the TSO staffing increases needed to meet wait time standards as well as increasing volumes. This investment will allow us to maintain acceptable wait times, and mitigate risk associated with crowding at checkpoints.

To complement a well-trained, sufficiently-sized work force, TSA is also focused on strengthening checkpoint operations through the development and acquisition of new technology. To this end, we are in the process of acquiring Computed Tomography (CT) units and Credential Authentication Technology (CAT) units, which represent significant technologic enhancements from the equipment currently used for identity verification and the screening of accessible property, and deploying them to airports Nation-wide as quickly as possible. CT technology will provide superior detection capability, will be more convenient for passengers, and eventually may eliminate the requirement to take electronics, liquids, aerosols, and gels out of carry-on bags.

As of February 25, 2020, there are 65 CT units deployed to checkpoints with another 49 units supporting testing and research and development. The fiscal year 2021 President's budget provides $28.9 million to support the procurement of 30 full-size CT units. The fiscal year 2021 funding will enable TSA to continue to accelerate the provision of CT technology to the field to enable our work force to more effectively and efficiently execute the mission.

CAT also provides a significant security upgrade to the identification verification and prescreening process. Ultimately, CAT will enable Secure Flight screening status to be known and cross-checked in near real time. In fiscal year 2019, TSA procured 505 CAT units, with 480 units deployed as of February 10, 2020. The fiscal year 2021 President's budget includes $2.3 million that will bring the number of CAT units to 1,520 Nation-wide. The continued rollout of CAT units to checkpoints will improve TSA's ability to detect fraudulent documents and screen passengers based on assessed risk. The CAT unit has also served as a key tool for TSA's efforts to meet the TSA Modernization Act requirement for TSA PreCheck® lanes to only serve passengers with Known Traveler Numbers, which will improve the TSA PreCheck® passenger experience, and serve as a platform for testing voluntary facial matching technology.

Finally, TSA strives through continued investment to improve the Advanced Imaging Technology (AIT) being used at our checkpoints today. The fiscal year 2021 President's budget provides $5 million to develop Next Gen AIT systems, and an additional $3 million of funding for research and development enhancements for Emerging Alarm Resolution technologies.

Our front-line work force can better execute their security mission when equipped with the technology needed to counter evolving threats. While sustained technological improvement at our checkpoints is critically important, we are also committed to investing in our most important asset, our people. TSA is pleased that our employees provide input into the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey, values their feedback, and acknowledges the concerns regarding pay dissatisfaction expressed through the survey. In an effort to address this long-standing work force challenge, I commissioned a Blue-Ribbon Panel of public and private-sector human capital experts last year to identify problems and recommend solutions. In 2019, we received a number of recommendations from the panel, including that TSA should better leverage the authorities and flexibilities provided through ATSA rather than convert to the General Schedule.

Recently, TSA has addressed locality-driven turnover issues through the use of retention incentives as a short-term fix for retaining TSOs in particularly competitive markets. Concurrently, we took measures to create career paths that aligned increased pay to enhanced training and skills by implementing the TSO Career Progression initiative. Through the fiscal year 2019 President's budget, TSA is transitioning away from relying predominantly on employing retention incentives at specific locations and instead adopting a more holistic and permanent solution by investing in career service pay, which will create a more predictable system for salary increases over a TSO's career. Additionally, the fiscal year 2021 budget supports the implementation of a second phase of our TSO Career Progression initiative, a merit-based promotion to 7,500 top performing TSOs.

The fiscal year 2021 President's budget funds 2 work force initiatives and represents a significant long-term commitment to our work force that will help address

these concerns. First, the budget includes $23.6 million for Service Pay to fund predictable, annual pay increases for TSOs who demonstrate service experience. The budget also seeks $11.3 million for the second phase of TSO Career Progression, an investment that will enable TSA to provide a 3 percent pay increase to screeners who demonstrate higher skill levels in checkpoint operations. Although TSA has the legal authority to implement these work force improvements, TSA requires the budgetary resources to provide these additional work force improvements to TSOs. We are confident that the investment in Service Pay and funding of the second phase of the TSO Career Progression initiative demonstrate how we can employ our ATSA authorities to make TSA an employer of choice.

Finally, in conjunction with the fiscal year 2021 President's budget, the administration has proposed raising the Aviation Passenger Security Fee, also known as the September 11 Security Fee, in order to fully cover the costs of aviation security by fiscal year 2018. The fee was created to cover the costs of aviation security, but in fiscal year 2020 only covers 39 percent of today's costs. The proposal would increase the fee by $1, from $5.60 to $6.60 per one-way trip in fiscal year 2021 and from $6.60 to $8.25 in fiscal year 2022. This measure would generate $618 million in new revenue in fiscal year 2021 and close to $28 billion in new revenue over the next 10 years.

Securing our Nation's transportation system is a complex task and we cannot do it alone. To achieve the priorities reflected within the fiscal year 2021 President's budget, we will continue to engage with industry and stakeholders, invest resources in our employees, and encourage the public to be part of the solution. Finally, through constructive oversight and dialog, we seek to partner with Congress as we work to secure all modes of transportation.

Chairman Correa, Ranking Member Lesko, and Members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I look forward to your questions.

Mr. CORREA. Thank you, Mr. Pekoske.

Now I would like to introduce our second witness, Admiral Schultz, who has served as the 26th commandant of the United States Coast Guard since June 2018. Before that, he served as commander of the Atlantic area from August 2016 to May 2018, where he was the operational commander of all Coast Guard missions spanning 5 Coast Guard districts and 40 States.

Admiral Schultz has also served as director of operations for United States Southern Command, where he directed joint military operations in the Caribbean and Central and South America.

Now I recognize the Admiral to summarize his statements for 5 minutes.

Welcome, sir.

STATEMENT OF ADMIRAL KARL L. SCHULTZ, COMMANDANT, U.S. COAST GUARD

Admiral SCHULTZ. Good morning, Chairman Correa, Ranking Member Lesko, distinguished Members of the subcommittee. I appreciate the opportunity to testify today.

On behalf of the men and women of the United States Coast Guard, please accept my profound thanks for your on-going and strong support.

The fiscal year 2020 appropriation funded our top recapitalization projects and represents a meaningful downpayment on my highest priority, building and sustaining Coast Guard readiness.

Today, your Coast Guard serves with impact across the globe to advance American security and prosperity, but, as noted, the maritime domain is not static, and our service must continually adapt to an increasingly complex and technologically-sophisticated maritime environment. Great power, competition, well-financed and highly adaptive transnational criminal organizations, rapid techno-

logical advancement in cyber threats and complex natural disasters all threaten and challenge and strain maritime governance.

As I reflect on the past year, I could not be prouder of our Coast Guard men and women who answer the call to serve. You saw us first on scene following Hurricane Dorian, the largest, most devastating storm to impact the government and commonwealth of the Bahamas. Millions watched in awe as the coastguardsmen fearlessly leapt onto a narcotics submarine in the eastern Pacific ocean. National security cutters Stratton and Bertholf plied East and South China Seas, including the Taiwan Straits, to promote free and open access to the oceans and adherence to the Rules-Based Order.

Coast Guard service members rescued 24 trapped crew members from the overturned MV Golden Ray, including 4 confined for more than 30 hours in engine room spaces exceeding 130 degrees Fahrenheit.

The demand on our Coast Guard services has never been higher, and these selfless feats typify what dedicated Coast Guard men and women do every day, yet these increasing demands amidst constrained resource levels inhibit our ability to build the Coast Guard the Nation truly needs.

While I am encouraged by our collective focus to address these historic funding gaps, it is simply not enough. The path forward requires stable and predictable capital funding that aligns with acquisition schedules, and 5 percent annual operations and support funding increases to preserve operational agility, and restore and henceforth sustain our readiness.

These essential steps address readiness across three key areas: People, assets and infrastructure, and technology.

First on the people front. People are the cornerstone of our success, and I remain committed to creating the conditions that not only attract the best of our Nation's diverse talent but also provide an inclusive and rewarding environment that positions the Coast Guard to be an employer of choice in this highly competitive marketplace for talent.

Building on the 2020 budget, the 2021 requests includes funding to expand diversity and inclusivity initiatives, modernize our antiquated training system, and continue our transition to electronic health records.

On the assets and infrastructure front, similarly, continued efforts to recapitalize the Coast Guard's aging fleet of vessels, aircraft, and shore infrastructure is absolutely essential. Our sole operational heavy icebreaker, the 44-year old Polar Star, deployed to Antarctica this winter once again to break out McMurdo Station, I recently had the opportunity to visit with the crew in the ship.

I am incredibly proud of the efforts of the men and women who sail aboard Polar Star, but I remain concerned that we are only one major engineering casualty away from being a Nation without any heavy icebreaking capability.

The good news is that both the administration and the Congress have duly recognized the burden on our Polar Star shipmates, and that is why I am grateful for your continued support to fund the first polar security cutter. As noted by the Chairman, there is

money in this budget for the second polar security cutter. We need to keep our foot on the accelerator there.

With your support, we are also making significant progress on our offshore patrol cutter program, and I am pleased to announce the keel laying on the first ship in the class, the Argus, will be held next month in Florida.

These cutters remain my highest acquisition priority, and continued progress is vital to replacing our fleet of medium-endurance cutters, some that are more than a half-century old.

In addition, the 2021 funding request includes help to address a portion of our $2 billion capital infrastructure backlog and also allows us to continue pressing forward on key initiatives like small unmanned aerial systems that really have proven game-changing on our National security cutters.

On the technology front, to build and sustain the Coast Guard the Nation needs, technological competence is critical, yet years of constrained budgets have brought our IT systems to the brink of failure. This 2021 request includes long-overdue initial investments to begin replacing our failing IT infrastructure and to improve underway connectivity essential to our sailors to be able to do their work at sea. Downgraded IT readiness puts lives at risk, and we are embarking upon a whole-of-service effort to ensure our people are supported by reliable, mobile, and integrated information systems. These are meaningful first steps, and I am truly grateful.

In closing, I am honored to be here today. I appreciate the opportunity to advocate for the men and women of the Coast Guard. Your continued support is absolutely essential to building the Coast Guard our Nation needs and for our folks to live up to the motto we hold, Semper Paratus, always ready.

I thank you for the opportunity. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Schultz follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KARL L. SCHULTZ

MARCH 11, 2020

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Correa and distinguished Members of the subcommittee, I appreciate the opportunity to testify today and thank you for your enduring support of the United States Coast Guard. In particular, the significant investments you provided in the fiscal year 2020 Consolidated Appropriations Act represent meaningful contributions to restore Coast Guard readiness and set the conditions for building the Coast Guard the Nation needs, and the Armed Force our extraordinary service members and their families deserve.

As a maritime nation, America's security and prosperity are inextricably linked to our unfettered access to oceans, inland rivers, deep water ports, and other connecting waterways. As we have for 230 years, the Coast Guard addresses National priorities and emerging threats in the homeland and across the globe—saving those in peril, thwarting illicit and coercive maritime activities, and fostering economic prosperity and environmental stewardship. Yet, the maritime domain in which we operate is becoming increasingly complicated. Great-power competition; well-financed and highly adaptive transnational criminal organizations (TCOs); rapid technological advancements and cyber threats in our seaports and aboard ships calling on those seaports; and natural disasters are all straining global systems for maritime governance.

Accordingly, demand for Coast Guard services has never been higher, and I am extremely proud of the mission excellence we delivered last year. We surged forces in response to natural disasters around the world—including the devastating impacts from Hurricane Dorian—saving lives and providing leadership in times of crisis. In support of the Department of Defense (DoD), Patrol Forces Southwest Asia

crews continued our enduring commitment to CENTCOM, and the National Security Cutter BERTHOLF plied the Taiwan Straits to promote "Rules Based Order" in support of INDOPACOM. We employed new capabilities and techniques, including the use of shipboard-based unmanned aerial systems, to combat cartels who use narco-submarines and other illicit craft to smuggle drugs and contraband destined for U.S. soil. We continued to work across the Government, international forums, and industry to keep pace with an increasingly sophisticated maritime domain, including complex cyber terrain. We promoted "free and open seas" and modeled adherence to the "rules-based order" in the global commons, and once again, sent our aging icebreakers to the Arctic and Antarctic to project sovereign presence and advance our National interests in these increasingly competitive and important strategic regions.

While I remain incredibly proud of the exceptional service the Coast Guard provides to the American taxpayer, increasing mission demands and constrained resource levels continue to challenge Service readiness for both steady-state missions and contingency operations. Hence, READINESS REMAINS MY TOP PRIORITY, and while I am encouraged by our collective focus to address funding gaps and shortfalls, much work remains to set the Service on a sustainable path going forward. Notably, the strong support we received in the fiscal year 2020 appropriation enabled the Coast Guard to begin addressing long-standing concerns, and now our fiscal year 2021 budget request before the Congress reflects our continued keen focus on READINESS.

RESTORE READINESS

People.—Building and sustaining a "mission-ready total work force" is the cornerstone of our success, and I remain committed to providing our dedicated and talented people with the tools, resources, and policies that will enable them to professionally thrive and personally grow. In fiscal year 2019, we introduced a number of personnel management policies to broaden diversity and enhance inclusion across the Service, as well other initiatives to improve the support we provide our members and their families. Through your support in the fiscal year 2020 appropriation, the Coast Guard continued our transition to Electronic Health Records, increased child care subsidies for military families living in high-cost areas, expanded recruiting and readiness initiatives, and increased throughput at flight school for aspiring Coast Guard aviators.

Going forward, we will continue to pursue policies and practices that maximize readiness and enable us to recruit, train, and retain a work force increasingly more representative of the American public we serve. We remain committed to creating an environment that not only attracts the best of our Nation's diverse talent, but also provides an inclusive environment and rich experience that positions the Coast Guard to be an employer of choice in a highly competitive marketplace for talent. To this end, our fiscal year 2021 budget requests includes nearly $175 million for pay and benefits; $13 million for work force initiatives to modernize our antiquated training system, and to expand diversity and inclusion initiatives; and $2 million to continue our transition to Electronic Health Records.

Assets and Infrastructure.—Recapitalizing the Coast Guard's aging fleet of vessels, aircraft, and shore infrastructure is critical to success. With the support of the administration and Congress, we are making significant progress toward building a Polar Security Cutter (PSC), the Nation's first heavy icebreaker in almost half a century. April 2019 saw the award of the Detailed Design and Construction (DD&C) contract for the construction of the first of 3 heavy icebreaker PSCs. The fiscal year 2021 appropriation provided funding for long lead-time materials for the second PSC, and now this fiscal year 2021 President's budget proposes fully funding its construction.

Further, the fiscal year 2021 budget request includes $546 million for the Offshore Patrol Cutter (OPC) program, the Coast Guard's highest acquisition priority. Continued progress on the OPC program is absolutely vital to recapitalizing our legacy fleet of 210-foot and 270-foot Medium Endurance Cutters (MECs), some of which have been in service for over 50 years! The program of record of 25 OPCs will comprise 70 percent of the Coast Guard's future offshore surface presence for decades to come. Coupled with the extended range and capability of the Coast Guard's National Security Cutter (NSC), and the enhanced coastal patrol and expeditionary capabilities of the Fast Response Cutter (FRC) fleet, the Service will be well-positioned to effectively enforce Federal laws, secure our maritime borders, disrupt TCOs, and respond to modern-day threats.

The nature of Coast Guard operations requires the Service to strategically and dynamically allocate operational resources in response to emergent National security,

economic prosperity, or safety of life missions. In addition to our top surface acquisitions, our fiscal year 2021 budget request includes $154 million for aviation initiatives, including the missionization of medium-range fixed-wing surveillance aircraft; the sustainment and modernization of MH–60 and MH–65 rotary wing fleets; and the deployment of Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems on-board our NSCs. To this end, the fiscal year 2021 budget also requests $29 million to convert Air Station Borinquen, Puerto Rico from MH–65 to MH–60 helicopters, capitalizing on the increased range and capabilities of that aircraft across the Caribbean.

I am also particularly mindful of the condition of our aging shore infrastructure and the adverse effects it has on readiness across all mission areas. The Coast Guard currently has a $2 billion shore infrastructure construction backlog that includes cutter piers; sectors, stations, aviation and base facilities; training centers; and military housing units.

Your support makes a substantive impact. In 2018 and 2019, the Coast Guard completed $152 million of shore infrastructure recapitalization, improving the physical condition and resilience of facilities in Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, North Carolina, California, Oregon, and Hawaii. We awarded contracts for another $73 million of construction projects in Maine, Virginia, South Carolina, Texas, California, Alaska, and Guam. We also appreciate the support of Congress for more than $70 million in funding in the fiscal year 2020 appropriation to support critical investments in California, Washington, and Hawaii. And our fiscal year 2021 budget request builds upon this momentum by including $140 million for family housing; aviation and shore forces readiness; physical security; and vessel homeport infrastructure in South Carolina, Washington, Florida, New York, Pennsylvania, Maine, and Maryland.

Technology.—Rapid maritime industrial innovation and sophisticated adversaries are changing the threat landscape of maritime operations. In order to meet these challenges, the Coast Guard must improve antiquated hardware and software, as well as introduce a data analytics capability. Years of difficult investment trade-offs in a constrained budget environment have brought our information technology systems to the brink of failure. Just this past summer, over 95 vital systems went offline for several days due to a single server malfunction, impacting our ability to save American citizens, thwart criminals, and even defend the Nation.

Degraded readiness puts lives at risk, and we are embarking upon a "Whole-of-Service" effort to ensure our dedicated people are supported by a reliable, mobile, and integrated information system. The fiscal year 2021 budget requests over $30 million to begin replacing the Coast Guard's failing information technology infrastructure, and to improve under way connectivity to our major cutter fleet. These are the first steps, but they cannot be the last—going forward we must invest in our network architecture, hardware, software, mobile technologies, and the modern data analytics capabilities needed to ensure mission success in the 21st Century.

CONCLUSION

The Coast Guard is in the midst of the largest recapitalization effort in its history—an effort that is critical to building the Coast Guard the Nation needs in order to meet increasingly complex National and economic security requirements. We must maintain momentum.

However, new assets alone are insufficient to sustain a mission-ready Coast Guard. Readiness requires investments in people, assets, infrastructure, and technology. With the continued support of the administration and Congress, your Coast Guard will live up to our motto—Semper Paratus—Always Ready. Thank you for your enduring support of the men and women of the Coast Guard.

ATTACHMENT.—FISCAL YEAR 2021 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

BUDGET PRIORITIES

- *Modernize Operational Capabilities*.—As a branch of the U.S. Armed Forces, a law enforcement organization, a regulatory agency, a member of the U.S. intelligence community, and a first responder, the Coast Guard is in high demand to meet the National Security needs of a changing global strategic environment.
- *Restore Readiness*.—Every Armed Force faces readiness challenges, and the Coast Guard is no exception. While the Coast Guard's on-going recapitalization efforts are essential to meeting the needs of the Nation, they must be coupled with targeted investments in people, assets and infrastructure, and technology to ensure a mission-ready Coast Guard.

The fiscal year 2021 budget requests $8.38 billion for Operations and Support (O&S) and $1.64 billion for Procurement, Construction, and Improvements (PC&I). Budget highlights include:

MODERNIZE OPERATIONAL CAPABILITIES

- $1.18 billion for vessels, including: $546 million for the construction of OPC No. 3 as well as long lead time materials for OPC No. 4; $555 million for PSC, including construction of PSC No. 2; $31 million for post-delivery activities for National Security Cutters (NSCs) No. 8–11; and $25 million for Waterways Commerce Cutter (WCC) to recapitalize the capabilities provided by the current fleet of inland tenders and barges (PC&I).
- $67 million for shore infrastructure improvements to support new acquisitions, including the PSC homeport in Seattle, WA, and infrastructure to support a fifth NSC in Charleston, SC (PC&I).
- $55 million for new assets including: Operations and maintenance funds for Fast Response Cutters (FRCs) No. 43–44 and NSC No. 9; crews for FRC No. 44 and OPC No. 1; shoreside personnel and support for FRCs No. 19–20, 34–35, 39–40, and OPC No. 1; and support for NSC capabilities, including tactical cryptology and small Unmanned Aircraft Systems (sUAS) (O&S).
- $33 million to expand Coast Guard cyber operations, including: Cyber enabling operations; facilitating prevention, response, and resilience for cyber incidents in the Marine Transportation System; and defense of Coast Guard networks (O&S).

RESTORE READINESS

People

- $116 million for requisite military pay and allowances per National Defense Authorization Act requirements, maintaining parity with the military branches within the Department of Defense, and $59 million for civilian pay and benefits (O&S).
- $15 million for work force readiness, including recruiting, retention, Diversity and Inclusion, training, and health care (O&S).

Assets and Infrastructure

- $154 million to sustain Coast Guard aircraft, including: $20 million to support service life extensions for MH–60T helicopters; $45 million for a service life extension and avionics upgrade on the MH–65 helicopter fleet; and $78 million for missionization of fixed-wing HC–27J and HC–144A aircraft (PC&I).
- $100 million to sustain Coast Guard cutters and boats, including $15 million to support service life extension of CGC POLAR STAR and $83 million to support service life extension of the 47-foot motor life boats and 270-foot medium endurance cutters (PC&I).
- $75 million for shore infrastructure projects supporting air operations in the National Capital Region and Clearwater, FL; facility upgrades in Buffalo, NY, and Philadelphia, PA; and construction of housing in Perry, ME (PC&I).
- $38 million to transition Air Station Borinquen, Puerto Rico from MH–65 to MH–60 helicopters and to improve the operational availability of fixed and rotary-wing aircraft (O&S).

Technology

- $24 million to improve the readiness of the Coast Guard's information technology infrastructure (O&S).
- $17 million for the enterprise mission platform, including military satellite and secure mobile communications (PC&I).
- $7 million for cutter underway connectivity improvements to meet mission requirements (O&S).

Mr. CORREA. Thank you very much, Admiral.

I want to thank all the witnesses for your testimony, and I will remind each Member that we each have 5 minutes to question the panel.

I will now recognize myself for 5 minutes of questions, and I would like to start with Mr. Pekoske.

You mentioned earlier 3 officers in San Jose were identified as testing positive?

Mr. PEKOSKE. Yes, sir. Three officers identified as testing positive, and we had yesterday received the confirmed test results. So we were certain that they were positive for COVID–19.

What we did—and none of these officers was at the workplace. Clearly they were with medical care. All 3 officers—the last time they were at the airport for the first officer was the 29th of February; the second officer, the 2nd of March; and, the third officer, the 21st of February. So, you know, we looked very carefully at that 14-day window where the disease is transmissible. What we did, as soon as we knew we had 3 cases, we did what we call contact tracing with everybody else that works at the airport. So, as——

Mr. CORREA. So you are attempting to identify passengers that may have interacted with those officers?

Mr. PEKOSKE. We do not attempt to identify passengers, sir. We first try to identify the members of our work force who would have interacted with those officers because we send those members—if it has been within that 14-day window, we send those members on weather and safety leave. So we send them home so that we can contain the virus to the folks that already——

Mr. CORREA. How many TSO officers are quarantined right now?

Mr. PEKOSKE. We have under a hundred quarantined right now. It is really not quarantined, sir. It is they are at home with instructions to limit their visits to stores and large public gatherings.

Mr. CORREA. What would happen if all TSO officers at one location need to be quarantined?

Mr. PEKOSKE. If all need to be quarantined—I don't think that is likely, although it is certainly possible—we have a National deployment force.

Mr. CORREA. I just want to reassure the public that we are on top of this and that we are doing——

Mr. PEKOSKE. Yes, sir.

Mr. CORREA [continuing]. What we need to do to protect the workers as well as the public.

Mr. PEKOSKE. Yes, sir. Ensuring the safety of my work force is my top priority. What you will always see TSA do—I think we have a very good history of doing this—is, when there is an issue, we publicly release the information on the issue. So the public is advised of the situation that we have and really what we are doing to address it.

Mr. CORREA. You know, when somebody is touched by coronavirus, we want to make sure that a worker doesn't have to choose between paying for their health care, paying for their deductible, so to speak, for being taken care of, and also having to choose between paying their bills and coming to work.

So, last year, TSA stopped paying full-time share of health insurance premiums to part-time TSO workers. So, if a part-time TSO worker is infected, are they going to come in to work or not?

Mr. PEKOSKE. Well, if anybody is infected, you know, our guidance is not to come in to work, to seek medical care with their own physician, and, you know, with respect to the medical coverage——

Mr. CORREA. I want to make sure that costs, paying for their health is not an issue, so would you, today, commit to restoring the

full-time Federal share of health insurance premiums for some of these—for the employees?

Mr. PEKOSKE. So we made a decision last year, consistent with practice throughout Government and also in the private sector, that, if you are a part-time employee, you are not eligible for full-time health care benefits, but what we have done, with respect to the economic incentives that you are asking about——

Mr. CORREA. Given this situation right now, if you are infected, it is not a part-time infection; it is you are infected.

Mr. PEKOSKE. If you are infected, yes, sir, and there is a course of treatment depending on the severity of the——

Mr. CORREA. Not a part-time job anymore; it is your life—your full-time life——

Mr. PEKOSKE. That is correct.

Mr. CORREA [continuing]. That is affecting you, so——

Mr. PEKOSKE. Right.

Mr. CORREA [continuing]. That is why I want to make sure that you are committed to restoring full-time Federal share of helping, and even for part-time workers.

Mr. PEKOSKE. Sir, I have no intention of restoring health care coverage for part-time workers. I think that was a good decision. We will certainly take care of our employees to the best of our ability, and we provide robust guidance to our entire work force with respect to how they prevent the disease in the first place.

Mr. CORREA. We need to address this issue again because I want to make sure we give the incentive to our employees to do the right thing, and costs to a part-time employee who may be infected become a decision point when it comes to health care.

Mr. PEKOSKE. Mr. Chairman, with respect to costs, you know, I mentioned that, for those that were in contact with the officers that confirmed positive on a COVID–19 test, that we sent them on weather and safety leave. That is fully paid leave. It doesn't come out of their sick leave balance.

That was intentionally designed so that officers didn't trade off finances for self-reporting, and we think that is very much in the interests of our officers, the entire work force, and the traveling public.

Mr. CORREA. I am running out of time. So let me be respectful to my other colleagues here, but I want to turn to the issue of the Federal Employees Compensation Act, or FECA, full coverage of related medical treatment and any wage loss, disability related to illness. Would you commit to providing all TSO officers access to FECA?

Mr. PEKOSKE. Sir, I am not familiar with the provisions of that law. I would have to look at that law to be able to answer the question. I would be happy to answer that for the——

Mr. CORREA. Again, my goal and I think our goal in terms of good public policy is to make sure that employees don't have to choose between paying their bills and coming to work when they know they may be infected.

Mr. PEKOSKE. Yes, sir. We provide every incentive for employees if they—and I have done several videos to the entire work force on this topic of, if you are not feeling well, don't come to work. That is an excused absence. Don't come to work.

Mr. CORREA. Thank you very much, and I recognize Mrs. Lesko for 5 minutes of questions.

Mrs. LESKO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, I want to say thank you to both of you for being here and answering questions, and for your service.

I want to compliment the TSA or TSOs. I usually travel between Phoenix and DCA, and I have to tell you, at those airports, they are always very courteous, professional. They do a great job.

I think, in your testimony, you said the budget allows you to do pay increases for TSOs, and can you explain to me a little bit more, since you are not under Title V, which is the Government schedule, are you able to pay people more that are doing a good job? Or tell me how this works.

Mr. PEKOSKE. Yes, ma'am. We are able to pay people whatever I determine the appropriate level of pay needs to be, and, you know, of course that is balanced against what—how much money I have in my accounts to be able to do that.

The key issue here with respect to work force pay is the funding. The authorities, in my opinion, that TSA has are much, much better than the funding—than the authorities, rather, under Title V.

With respect to the incentives that are in the budget, for example, we put longevity pay in there, as I mentioned in my opening statement. This provides for annual either 2, 1.5, or 1 percent raises depending on where you are in one of our pay bands every single year. By contrast, in Title V, that is not every single year as you get more senior in the general schedule grades.

The other thing that we are emphasizing is career progression because I think it is important that we point a path for everybody in the agency as to how their career could progress and how they will be financially rewarded as they acquire new skills. That career progression piece is called E–3 pay, and that provides 3 percent. That is a pretty good pay raise once you acquire advanced resolution skills. That applies to 7,500 officers in our biggest pay band.

The final pay incentive issue is what we call the model officer recognition program. Every year, we will identify the top 5 percent of our performers and provide those individuals an additional pay raise beyond longevity, if they are in the E band, potentially beyond career progression, for being in the top 5 percent, which is a significant accomplishment to be in the top 5 percent of your peers.

Mrs. LESKO. Commandant Schultz, what is the Coast Guard doing? How are you involved in the coronavirus issue? How is the Coast Guard involved?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Well, Ranking Member Lesko, thank you for the question.

First and foremost, like TSA, our No. 1 priority is the health and safety of the American people. We are looking Nation-wide to support CDC and other front-line organizations on the medical front in terms of prevention, protecting, mitigating spread. You know, clearly, you know, maritime traffic on cruise ships have been a very focal area. We were involved with our 11th district commander in working with all the port stakeholders as the Grand Princess was brought into Oakland the other day.

So we are providing maritime technical expertise to the Vice President's task force. We are working the issues on the water-

front. There are many stakeholders, as you both know, from IOWU union folks, to the port stakeholders, that those cruise ships, typically in San Francisco, for example, tie up over in downtown San Francisco. It took a lot of moving parts that the Coast Guard is involved in. So we will continue to focus, No. 1, on public safety; No. 2, lend our expertise as a maritime—Federal maritime agency that tends to be a leadership in many of these spaces, and that is where we have been focusing our efforts, ma'am.

Mrs. LESKO. Thank you. Yes, that whole cruise ship thing, I guess I could get a good bargain on a cruise right now if I wanted to.

Admiral SCHULTZ. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. LESKO. But I don't think I am going to chance it, quite frankly.

On the—Mr. Pekoske, on the budget, there were some declines in the budget over the enacted budget levels for this year, and how do you think that is going to affect—like I think there was a budget decline on the credential authentication technology, the CAT technology. I am all for innovation—I think I told you this before—and technology. I think, in the long run, that it is really going to improve things. With this, credential authentication technology, I think it will help identify people that maybe we don't want in our country, and maybe it can partner more with agencies like CDC.

So I am a little bit concerned that the funding on some of these things is going down, but maybe you can explain why that is OK. Did we have too much funding before? Are we behind in installing some of this technology?

Mr. PEKOSKE. Well, Ranking Member Lesko, the credential authentication technology, you are exactly right. I mean, it is a significant improvement in our capability of the checkpoint. For me—and I speak for all of my officers when I say this—give me a tool that allows me to do my job better, because everybody wants to do as good a job as they can.

The other key part of the credential authentication technology is it is connected to our secure flight system, so you get a live read of what a person's risk status is, and you also have their flight information automatically. So, for passengers, we don't even need a boarding pass once——

Mrs. LESKO. Yes.

Mr. PEKOSKE [continuing]. This is installed because we have all that information in front of us.

With respect to the extension of time it takes to implement, that is simply a budget ceiling. We all operate within budget ceilings, and we have to make some difficult choices as to, you know, what speed at which we are going to fund certain acquisition programs, but both the CT and certainly the CAT are critical for us.

The other one that is going to be very important, and there is some money in the budget to start the research and development on is that on-body anomaly detection process. That is the third piece of major technology that we are looking at.

Mrs. LESKO. Well, and that is good. I think we think the same on employing technology, and you are right; we have to live within our budget, just like our family has to live within our budget. Unfortunately the Federal Government doesn't do as good of a job as,

you know, we do in our families. We are too much—way too much in debt and deficit. So I understand that we have to not always just keep increasing our budget, but it is important, and so I want to thank both of you again for doing the job that you are doing. Your employees are doing great jobs, and thank you.

I yield back.

Mr. CORREA. Thank you, Mrs. Lesko.

Now I recognize Ms. Barragán for 5 minutes of questions.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Thank you to both of you gentlemen for being here today. I wanted to also thank you—thank the Coast Guard. I represent the port of Los Angeles and have the Coast Guard there. So the men and the women and the work that you do is so critically important. So I just wanted to take a moment to say thank you.

Admiral, can you explain—and I apologize if I missed this—what the Coast Guard's role is in the coronavirus?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congresswoman Barragán, absolutely. I mentioned that before, but just a quick recap.

So we are, first and foremost, like our TSA colleagues, public safety is focus No. 1. No. 2, it is really about, you know, Nationwide efforts to prevent, protect, and mitigate the—you know, the impacts of the coronavirus.

We are working—and I am represented with Secretary Wolf, the Secretaries on the President's, Vice President's task force. We are informing that with maritime technical expertise. In your port, for example, you know, we have been paying attention to—it was the Regal Princess down there, and it is the Grand Princess up in San Francisco. Each one of those vessel arrivals, getting—you know, interacting with CDC—and we have used up in San Francisco a Coast Guard patrol boat that is ferrying out CDC experts. We did some medical evacuations. We are involved with all the port stakeholders to tackle these very complicated cases that come——

Ms. BARRAGÁN. So are you—I didn't mean to interrupt you, but are you—is the Coast Guard screening passengers as they are coming off, or is that just——

Admiral SCHULTZ. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. So how does that work generally?

Admiral SCHULTZ. We—there are about 4,000 vessel arrivals in the United States on a monthly basis. We look at all of them. There is a criteria called 96-hour advance notice of arrival.

So CBP looks at cargo. We look at people. So we are looking at vessels that left and, you know, they are—say it is a cruise ship. If their transit is more than 14 days, there is different criteria than if you are inside that 14-day period. If it is inside 14 days, you don't come to the dock.

We are looking at cargo vessels. So, in the port of Los Angeles, Long Beach, we look at all those cargo operations coming in. We find out if there is anybody on board that is presenting with any type of medical symptoms. We work with CDC, that they are met either by CDC folks or local health reps. Typically those cargo operations have been allowed to proceed. The crew members are restricted to the confines of the ship to port. Ship does its business and gets back to sea. So we are very much interfacing, ma'am, on the waterfront with all those stakeholders.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. I think I read somewhere that it is the Coast Guard that is airlifting kits to these vessels—rather, to the cruise ships. Is that right?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Ma'am, we have done some of that. We had—we actually—there was National Guard involved with the Grand Princess, with some helicopter operations. We were involved with some of that.

We did some things with some of our patrol boats that tie up at Yerba Buena Island in San Francisco, and they ferried out CDC folks. They ferried out test kits. They ferry—you know, they have been involved in the logistics to support these operations.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Is it your understanding that the Coast Guard could have access to some of the resources provided by the $8.3 billion COVID–19 supplemental?

Admiral SCHULTZ. So, Congresswoman, to date, my understanding of it is we are keeping a running account of what our Coast Guard bills are here for possible subsequent funding. We weren't specifically part of that initial $8.3 billion, but we are tracking our bills, and, if there is subsequent supplemental on this front, we would put our voice into that. But, to date, we are managing this inside our existing funding profile.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. So, just to be clear, your understanding is you don't qualify for any of the $8.3 billion that Congress just passed, but you are keeping track of your dollars to figure out what else we can ask for where the Coast Guard can get their costs back?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Yes, ma'am. We are able to do the missions we are doing to support this today, inside our existing profile. I would argue we would say we have been funded for what we continue to do, but we are tracking costs here if there is a subsequent, you know, appropriation on this front.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Great. The administration assures us that the response to the COVID–19 is a whole-of-Government approach. The Centers for Disease Control has put out guidance for workplaces. Mr. Administrator, is TSA abiding by the CDC workplace guidelines?

Mr. PEKOSKE. Yes, ma'am, we are. We abide by CDC and also OSHA guidelines with respect to the workplace.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Are TSOs required to change gloves between each pat-down of a passenger?

Mr. PEKOSKE. Not between each pat-down, but we have increased the frequency with which they change gloves. We have also made a number of changes—for example, some of the officers don't wear gloves. If you look at the person that is the first person that you see, you give your driver's license or passport to, typically they have not worn gloves, but we have made that a requirement to wear gloves.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. So everybody does wear gloves now?

Mr. PEKOSKE. They do. Those blue gloves that you see.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. What is the rationale on how often they should be changing their gloves if they are not doing it between each passenger?

Mr. PEKOSKE. The rationale is that, you know, based on medical guidance, we don't think it is necessary to change after every passenger. You know, we do have different disposal requirements now

given the COVID threat that we are facing off of the disposal of those gloves, but we just don't think it is necessary medically to do that.

Ms. BARRAGÁN. Thank you. I yield back.

Mr. CORREA. Thank you.

Now I recognize Mr. Van Drew from New Jersey for 5 minutes of questions.

Mr. VAN DREW. Thank you, Chairman.

First of all, I want to thank both of you for the work that you do. It is relatively easy to be up here and ask hard questions, but it is awful hard to get all these goals accomplished, and this has been a particularly difficult time in our history in general, not only because of the coronavirus but because of all the challenges that you have.

I am very proud of the Coast Guard particularly because of all the interaction I have had with them in my district and all the good they have done for Cape May County and the Atlantic County and the entire area, and of course, you know, the administrator, all the work that your folks do day in, day out, with tremendous challenge and a lot of hard work. So thank you, and I am proud of your people. I know you are, too.

One point I wanted to make. I know, in the beginning of this, the very beginning of this discussion, there was the idea of—that perhaps you are underfunded, and I would maintain that I would like to see more funds for both of you, but it wouldn't, in my mind, be at the expense of maintaining our borders. I think we have to maintain our air, our sea, and our borders; they are all important. Just to express for the record that my view isn't that the wall is, you know, unimportant or a waste, or that technology at the border is a waste either.

I think we can see the effect that the world can have, especially in our new world, on this global economy, on this global existence we have, on all of us, in so many ways, and, quite frankly, we do have to maintain our borders and our security both. So I just wanted to express that as well before I made my—put forward my questions.

So it is good to see both of you, and I thank you for coming in to testify today, and I thank you for your work to make sure that our Coast Guard is strategically and operationally on course. As you know, my district has some very important Coast Guard assets. This includes the training center at Cape May, which is home to all of the Coast Guard's enlisted, extensions in the air station, Atlantic City, the largest air station on the Coast Guard's 5 operational district.

I am a strong supporter of the Coast Guard, and I want to make sure that these men and these women have the infrastructure they need to protect our Nation's maritime systems. I do, however, understand that there is a very large deficit in the Coast Guard's PC&I budget for infrastructure.

Can you remark upon the infrastructure deficit in a broad sense, and then focus on some of the infrastructure needs that are specific to my district?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congressman Van Drew, thanks for the question, and thanks for your strong support for our men and women.

We do have a large capital backlog of major infrastructure projects. It is up around the ballpark of $2 billion. So that is something—and, if you look at a healthy organization and you sort-of benchmark across Government, organizations tend to bite into their capital accounts about 2 percent a year. We are nowhere close to that. We are, you know, in tenths of a percentage point. So this is a difficult problem today, and it is an increasingly difficult problem unless we start getting after that.

You know, from a standpoint of employees in the Coast Guard, it is competitive disadvantage. You know, folks want to come to places and see investments in the facilities that work at Cape May. There is no current 2021 project specifically targeting Cape May. Cape May has been on what we call our unfunded priorities list that we provide to the Congress, you know, in every year, and it shows what would be those next things.

You know, we work to a top line in each budget cycle, and then there is those things, if you had a little more space, what would you do? We continue to carry some money, some projects on that list for barracks upgrades and other things at Cape May. So Cape May clearly is a place that warrants some facility—as we did the puts and takes in the 2021 budget build, you know, that did not rise to the top.

This year, in the budget build, we will get after some facility upgrades. There is what we call major acquisition shore money that allow us to put those icebreakers up in Seattle. We have to prepare the port there, our base there, to receive those vessels. We are doing the same thing in Charleston.

I announced recently that there is 3 more National securities going to Charleston. That is going to be another hub of excellence for us. We are hoping that will be a good place for Coast Guard families looking forward. There is monies here as we do this air capital defense, what we call the NCRAD mission, the National Capital Region Air Defense Mission, the helicopters you see around Washington.

We are bouncing those. We are flying those out of Air Station Washington, out of a temporary facility. We are looking to get into hangar 14 out there at Andrews. There is funding in the 2021 budget for that.

So there is some positive progress, I would say, sir, on biting into this shore infrastructure backlog, but it has to be sustained. We have got to continue to do this on a recurring basis every year to really start driving that down crew.

Mr. VAN DREW. We won't forget Cape May.

Admiral SCHULTZ. We won't forget Cape May, sir.

Mr. VAN DREW. All right. Last year, there was a budget request submitted by the Coast Guard for barracks renovations at the training center in Cape May. These renovations would modernize the barracks and ensure that both male and female Coast Guard trainees are accommodated. I would like to advocate for this project's inclusion, authorization, and funding so that our Coast Guard men and women start their careers with the facilities and the resources that they need. I would appreciate, Commandant, if you could look into this important project and get back to me on its status as well.

Finally, just to say that, again, how proud I am of both of you and the people that work for you. One of the harshest things I remember, just real briefly, that I would love to see change—and I know I have legislation—when, God forbid, we ever have a Government shutdown again, which I hope we never do—I would never—I don't think any of us on either side of the aisle want to see it, but, when the Coast Guard didn't get paid because they weren't part of DOD, those men and women literally did suffer, and, as you know, we had fundraisers, and we helped them in many ways, but that is no way to take care of them. They should just receive the income that they deserve.

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congressman, I appreciate that point. That was difficult on our folks. We continue to try to inform that, find some type of a, you know, parallel legislative construct to pay our military, maybe Pay Our Coast Guard Act. That has proven challenging, but we continue to try to support——

Mr. VAN DREW. All military should be made.

Admiral SCHULTZ. Sir, on Cape May, I absolutely share your concern. That is the first impression that men and women that join our ranks, our enlisted work force, see about the Coast Guard. So their position—you know, their view of our service is informed by that experience. So I would like to better that at the first opportunity we can, sir——

Mr. VAN DREW. Thank you.

Admiral SCHULTZ [continuing]. To ensure that vision.

Mr. VAN DREW. Thank you, Chairman.

Mr. CORREA. Thank you, Mr. Van Drew.

Mr. Bishop, recognized for 5 minutes of questions.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, gentlemen, for your testimony and your answers to questions.

Administrator Pekoske, the Registered Traveler Program is—might be the perfect example of a successful public-private partnership helping to drive innovation, technology, and security to the checkpoint at zero cost to the taxpayer.

What is TSA doing to support the Registered Traveler Program as it continues to expand to more users and airports?

Mr. PEKOSKE. So thanks for the question. You know, we have worked with the registered traveler provider for many, many years, a very successful partnership between the two of us. I meet regularly with the CEO and the president of that company. So it has been a successful program.

The only thing I would say is that this is a distinction between a Registered Traveler Program and a trusted traveler program. A trusted traveler program is a program where the Government conducts a background vetting of applicants, wherein, in a Registered Traveler Program, that is not the case. But, nonetheless, the Registered Traveler Program has been very valuable in verifying the identity of passengers as they present themselves.

Mr. BISHOP. You were answering Member Lesko's questions about the Credential Authentication Technology Program. As that rolls out, what are its implications for the continuation of the Registered Traveler Program?

Mr. PEKOSKE. Sir, that is a great question, and we have been working very closely with our registered traveler provider to make that as seamless as possible, because neither of us feel that we need to revalidate the identity because the Registered Traveler Program does that very, very well.

It is just making sure that the identity verification is transmitted to our travel document checker, and, that way, we can look at the risk status and make sure the passenger is in the right screening profile. We have got a number of examples of how that might work, and we continue to work closely together to explore those.

Mr. BISHOP. Are your efforts devoted to continuing to make it practicable to use the Registered Traveler Program notwithstanding the——

Mr. PEKOSKE. Yes, sir. I think they can both exist together, and that is really both of our goals, is to see us through that point because, you know, the Registered Traveler Program has a very good identity verification process that is quick, and we would like to see that continue.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you, sir.

Mr. PEKOSKE. Thank you.

Mr. BISHOP. Commandant Schultz, I was pleased to see, after learning a good bit about it in a prior hearing that the President prioritized U.S. Arctic interests by including $555 million for construction of a second polar security cutter. You made reference to that. Is 1 additional heavy icebreaker enough to counter Russia and China in the region?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congressman, thanks for, (A), the Congress' support for the icebreaker program and your interests there.

Absolutely not. The program of record here is the first polar security cutter, which we awarded a contract last April when I was finishing up detail design work this year, started cutting steel in calendar year 2021, hopefully to have that ship delivered 2024, possibly a little sooner with some incentives.

The money in this year's budget as you noted, sir, is full production for the second polar security cutter. The program of record is up to 3, so an option for a second and third ship.

We absolutely, sir, gotta build to that third ship. I think there is a conversation beyond the 3 polar security cutters. We are looking at requirements for what a medium breaker might look like.

Both China and Russia—and we think about the National Defense Strategy and competing global powers, you know, they both made Arctic operations a priority. One is a legitimate Arctic nation here with a long Arctic coast and the Northern Sea Route. President Putin sees that as essentially a toll road. Twenty-two, 25 percent of his GDP is driven from Arctic operations today, and the ship from Shanghai that could go through the Suez Canal can knock off 2 weeks if they go across—you know, through the Bering and across Russia. So that is very much in the Russian calculus as they sort of re-emerge or try to re-emerge.

For the Chinese, they are interested in the energy up in the Arctic. You know, there is a third of the untapped natural gas, 13 percent of petroleum products on the ocean floor; a trillion dollars of, you know, minerals link, or zinc, lead, palladium, gold. They are also interested in, you know, defense over the poles.

You know, we are sighting fifth-generation fighters up there in my DOD counter—you know, counterparts there. China's interest is very important.

So we absolutely, sir—it is a capacity conversation. The good news is we are acting on it with the polar security cutter program.

Mr. BISHOP. I recall in those earlier hearings that there was some suggestion of the need for more thorough development of the Coast Guard's long-term strategy in the region. Can you sort-of comment on the continuing efforts to complete that? You may have to some degree with your last answer.

Admiral SCHULTZ. Yes, sir. I rolled out an Arctic strategy refresh in the spring ahead of the award of the contract last year. There is a couple lines of effort.

While we are waiting for this first polar security cutter to come to the waterfront, we need to look at communications. Very limited communications in the Arctic today. So we are looking at, you know, partnering with industry, looking at our defense partners—USNORTHCOM, NORAD, General O'Shaughnessy. We are talking about what might be practical in terms of some type of lower satellite, a payload on there that can enhance communications.

The Healy, our medium breaker, operated last year above the Arctic Circle for about 3 months. About 30, 45 days of that, had very limited connectivity. Other than a satellite position report, they couldn't do ship's business. That has to improve, sir.

Domain awareness. You know, it is a vast area. Even if you had 3 polar security cutters operating up there at the same time, which wouldn't be our operating profile—we still have the Antarctic missions. You know, there is still a huge amount here.

So we have got to use technology to enhance our understanding of the Arctic domain, sir.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you. Thank you, gentlemen. Thank you very much, Admiral Schultz.

I yield back.

Mr. CORREA. Thank you. What I would like to do is go through a second round of questions if I can, and I will start out with Administrator Pekoske.

Following up on a question I asked about paying full share of health insurance premiums for part-time TSO officers and the issue of the full coverage of related medical treatment and wage loss under the Federal Employee Compensation Act, these are budgetary decisions I presume you are making. You were paying for their full share last year, at least for health insurance premiums, and now you cut those back.

You know, I can't think of anybody right now in this country that is more of a front line, thin blue line kind of a defense than your TSO officers. We talk about a border wall, but, if you think about where people are coming from all over the world, who is interacting with international travelers, it is your officers. They are the ones that are really on the front line.

We have part-timers, full-timers, different benefits, different health benefits. Yet they are the ones that are really interacting right now with people from all over the world. We just approved, the administration, $8.3 billion to address this health crisis.

Have you asked for any resources there to be shifted to your Department so that we can be better prepared to address this country's needs?

Mr. PEKOSKE. Yes, sir. A couple of comments. First, with respect to the part-time work force, we have a concerted effort to reduce the percentage of part-time employees as compared to full-time employees.

Mr. CORREA. As we should, yes.

Mr. PEKOSKE. Yes, as we should. So I just would, you know, really want us to be cognizant of that fact. We are trying to get to 80/20 and then eventually 90/10 and——

Mr. CORREA. So you do believe we need to professionalize those TSO officers and make sure they are the best of the best, given that not only are they now dealing with coronavirus, they were dealing with Zika, Ebola before, they are trying to make sure nothing gets through those checkpoints that can bring down one of our planes. So we have to have the best of the best. So we agree on that, full-time professional work force?

Mr. PEKOSKE. Yes, sir, we do. The budget reflects investment in our work force, and I think what you have seen and your colleagues have seen is that is where my focus is, is on the front line of the agency, making sure that we do everything we can to support them as best we can. Because you are right, they are individuals that see on average 2.6 million passengers every single day in this country. So it is a significant responsibility, and they do, in my view, an excellent job.

Mr. CORREA. So would it not be a good idea then to restore full share of health benefits to payment of premiums of health benefits of part-time workers?

Mr. PEKOSKE. Sir, I think it is important that we treat part-time employees in Government like we treat part-time employees in the private sector and——

Mr. CORREA. Except that these are not private-sector employees. These part-time workers are really doing the same thing as the full-time workers, which are interacting with passengers, making sure nothing gets on those planes that can bring down the plane. It doesn't matter if you are part-time or full-time, you have the same responsibility. Zero mistakes needs to be the rule.

Mr. PEKOSKE. Yes, sir, yes, sir. The proposal to reduce the medical benefit to part-time employees was part of last year's budget that was passed by the Congress and——

Mr. CORREA. Again, we have an $8.3 billion augmentation here to fight this medical crisis. Have you asked for any of those resources to help you balance your books?

Mr. PEKOSKE. Sir, in the $8.3 billion supplemental that was just passed by the Congress, DHS did not have any funding in that supplemental. So no——

Mr. CORREA. There weren't any requests for any of that $8.3 billion to come to your Department?

Mr. PEKOSKE. We all made requests, but those requests did not make it into the final supplemental.

Mr. CORREA. I would like to continue to work with you on this issue because, again, I really believe that this is an area we have got to beef up on. We have to make sure that there is zero toler-

ance when it comes to any mistakes, any oversights by our TSO officers. Let's work together on this. This is not a gotcha. This is not—we want to make sure that our public is confident of the job that you are doing. I really believe in my heart and based on the facts that coronavirus is just one of many others to come. So we need to make sure that your work force is prepared to address these health issues as well as terrorist issues that are coming at us.

Mr. PEKOSKE. Yes, sir. If I could make one point on that?

Mr. CORREA. Please do.

Mr. PEKOSKE. The key issue here, in my view, is the funding for that work force. As you know, we have authorities that no other agency has in this Government to take care of the work force. It is the funding that we don't have enough of, and that is why you see requests in the President's budget to increase the funding for our front-line work force. Note, please, that I am starting with the transportation security officers. That is 45,000 of the 64,000 men and women in the agency. They are absolutely on the front line, but I fully intend to move to the Federal Air Marshal Service——

Mr. CORREA. See the President is budget-shifting some of the funding away to other priorities, like the wall, and not into your Department.

Mr. PEKOSKE. Sir, there are always priorities that any President has, and those priorities are reflected in the top line allocation.

Mr. CORREA. I would say this is a clear and present danger that we are facing right now on a world-wide scale.

Mr. PEKOSKE. Yes, sir. The other thing to think about, and it goes to the prior question about, let's say, for example, shut-down funding. As you know, the Transportation Security Administration's appropriations are offset by fee collections. That fee resource would be an excellent candidate to source pay for officers, which would not be affected by appropriations. So that would insulate both TSA and then, from the comments earlier, the Coast Guard as a military service from the anxiety that certainly any member of a work force will have when faced with Government shutdown.

Mr. CORREA. Administrator, it sounds like we have a lot of work to do, so let's continue to work together.

Mr. PEKOSKE. Thanks.

Mr. CORREA. Thank you.

I would like to recognize Mrs. Lesko for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LESKO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am just going to make a brief comment, and then I have to go to Judiciary Committee for bill mark-up. You know, of course, it is important that you get adequate funding, especially for our TSOs. I do believe that it is important that we keep them well-paid. But as I said before, we all have to live within budget constraints. I mean, taxpayers don't have like an unlimited amount of money. The amount of interest we are paying on our National debt, I forget the saying, but it is soon going to surpass, I think, all of the Department of Defense funding, if I remember. You know, so this is a serious problem, too. So we have to balance everything out just as we do in our own family and our own homes, and so I know it is a difficult task. I am glad that you are giving pay raises to the TSOs.

With that, I yield back.

Thank you.

Mr. CORREA. I recognize Ms. Barrágan for 5 minutes of questions.

Ms. BARRÁGAN. Since a comment was made about the deficit, let me say that I think the way that we spend our money in our budgets are reflective of our values, and I would much rather give a pay increase to the Coast Guard and to TSA and to those on the front lines of fighting terror and keeping our country safe than just major corporations who didn't ask for a tax cut.

So, with that said, I had a follow-up question for you, Admiral. Given the increased role of the Coast Guard and their need for man hours to respond to the coronavirus, has that impacted the branch's other official missions that you may have?

Admiral SCHULTZ. Congresswoman, we are a multimission service by definition. So 11 statutory authorities as was alluded to in one of the opening statements from your leadership. We have the bandwidth to manage this. We have the folks in the port. It has been, you know, around the clock here for days here. I would be, you know, remiss to not call that out. But currently, ma'am, I think we can manage our other mission areas. This is in the regulatory role with the cruise industry. We still have our law enforcement missions, our rescue missions, our, you know, enhancing economic prosperity on America's waterways, aids navigation, that continues. We are an organization of almost 42,000 uniformed men and women. So this is front and center. It is very relevant and critically important to the American public. It has our top priority, and we are, you know, informing the decision makers in Government with the best military maritime expertise, but we have the bandwidth, ma'am, to continue our other missions.

Ms. BARRÁGAN. Do you believe the Coast Guard has the proper and sufficient supplies of protective equipment for your men and women who are on the front lines of the coronavirus?

Admiral SCHULTZ. So like the TSA administrator, when this crisis, this COVID–19 situation started, the first thing we took was stock of our personal protective equipment, PPE we call it, for our men and women. Our men and women interface on the water. We would be involved in those medical evacuations potentially of COVID–19-infected patients. So, yes, we are looking at that. We are looking at our stocks. You know, there are finite quantities. So we are making sure we inform our needs and not, you know, exceeding our ask, but we are in a good spot now of what we need, and we are continuing to track the situation and ensure that, first and foremost, our front line operators are doing this safely and continue to do the work that the Nation needs them to do.

Ms. BARRÁGAN. OK. Thank you.

Mr. Administrator, I wanted to follow up with you on a line of questioning that I didn't get to finish about the changing of gloves and things like that. Are TSOs required to change the hand swabs used to detect traces of explosives between each time they are wiped on a passenger's hands or belongings?

Mr. PEKOSKE. They are now. We made that policy change yesterday. In the past, they would go through a series of swipes because there was not a risk of cross-contamination. We now see that with

the coronavirus, and so we have an adequate supply to have them change out the swabs for every time they use them.

Ms. BARRÁGAN. So the policy was just implemented, did you say, yesterday?

Mr. PEKOSKE. Yes.

Ms. BARRÁGAN. Are TSOs and airport custodians or anyone else required to regularly clean frequently touched surfaces at checkpoints, including the bins thousands of passengers put their cell phones, shoes, and other belongings in?

Mr. PEKOSKE. Yes, ma'am. The airports are partners with us in that cleaning regime. They clean the rest of the airport. I will give you an example. In the San Jose Airport when we had the 3 officers who tested positive for COVID–19 yesterday, the airport very quickly went through and sanitized the entire airport, including the TSA checkpoint.

But the other thing that we look at carefully——

Ms. BARRÁGAN. How regularly is that happening? Just can you tell me how regularly are they going to, you know, clean?

Mr. PEKOSKE. Yes, ma'am. It really depends on the circumstance, and it depends on the airport because that is an airport contract. But if I could get to a little rationale here is, with respect to the bins, if you were to really sanitize the bins, you would have to sanitize them after every single use, and that is just not feasible in our checkpoint operations, nor do we think that is the primary form of transmission. It is basically hand-to-hand contact with a passenger. That is the reason for the gloves.

So, you know, even as we look to some of these things from a medical perspective—and I really like to just understand the science and what the medical requirements are and make decisions based on that. So we could have a lot of activity that might not actually have an operational benefit to it.

Ms. BARRÁGAN. Do the checkpoints have sanitizers for passengers coming through?

Mr. PEKOSKE. No, ma'am. But one of the changes we are going to make is to allow passengers, likely beginning today or tomorrow, to bring a larger quantity of sanitizer through our checkpoint. It is going to require a little bit more screening on our part because we have to verify that that is, in fact, hand sanitizer in the bottle, but we do want to increase that volume to make it easier for passengers, particularly those that don't check bags, to bring a volume of sanitizer with them because, as you know, you could go to another city and find none available on the shelves.

Ms. BARRÁGAN. Well, I hope that that information will be made available publicly so that passengers will get that before they get to the airport so they know they can bring it.

Thank you. Thank you, both.

Mr. PEKOSKE. Thank you.

Ms. BARRÁGAN. I yield back.

Mr. CORREA. I recognize Mr. Bishop for 5 minutes of questions, sir.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I might pursue for a moment the point of focus by the Chairman, Mrs. Lesko and Ms. Barrágan. I guess I would begin by suggesting that our problems with our budget deficit and debt are by no

means limited to issues of preferring the interests of corporations over individuals. It is a really mammoth problem.

One person made the point to me recently that a good way to think of debt that is expressed in the trillions is not as a trillion but how much that boils down to for every family in America. So a trillion dollars is $8,000 for every household in America, meaning that if we have got a $23.4 trillion debt right now, that is $187,200 for every household in America. If you consider that 2 of our essential programs, Medicare and Social Security, are anticipated to run over the next 30 years at $103 trillion deficit, that is something in excess of $800,000 for every household in America. It is a striking figure if you begin to realize how big our challenge is there.

So I certainly think we do have to be mindful of budget efficiencies. I actually also think it makes sense to attempt to follow the private market in terms of determining public pay. So I think our TSOs need to be paid better, but in terms of health insurance, I would agree that it ought to follow practice in the private market.

Let me ask you this, though, because I understood that perhaps the Chairman's questions were focused in part on the notion of whether our current situation with coronavirus changes the calculus in terms of whether there ought to be provision of full insurance coverage for part-time workers. By the way, I also think it is a good idea to follow your policy priority of moving toward full-time employment. So I would not discourage that at all. This is a question that I just don't know the answer to because I have more experience in State government and State law, but are TSOs covered within the coverage of workers' compensation program?

Mr. PEKOSKE. Yes, sir, I believe they are. You know, we will do everything we can to support our TSOs, particularly those that come back positive with a COVID test or those that have had contact with someone who has, to make sure that they have all of the information that they need and the support from us because, you know, this is—and just like in my experience in the Coast Guard, this is very much an everybody supports everybody else; everybody is in it together to get the mission accomplished.

I would like to make another point, though, sir, because you raised a really good issue. In a lot of things that we do in TSA with respect to our security directives and emergency amendments, which are directives that I can issue to address a security threat, in many, many cases, the funding to address those threats are borne by the carriers and by the airports because we place specific requirements on them. For example, when we had the travel restrictions first put in place for people who had been in China over the past 14 days and people who have been in Iran over the past 14 days, the requirement to do that questioning and that work was placed by me on the carriers by directive, but it is their cost to be able to carry that forward.

I would also note, too, that we have received tremendous support from both airports and carriers in purchasing technology that we need, that they like, too, because it serves the interests of their passengers from a passenger experience perspective, literally in the millions and millions of dollars. So the corporate piece of that for TSA is quite significant and also applies on the surface transportation security side.

Mr. BISHOP. All of that is very interesting, and let me just follow this point up a little bit further. If a TSO were exposed to and contracted coronavirus in the scope and course of employment and, therefore, had to be quarantined for a period of time, wouldn't there be—wholly apart from coverage for health insurance, wouldn't that person be covered under a workers' compensation program so that any health care cost, any temporary disability from work resulting from that would be covered by that workers' compensation?

Mr. PEKOSKE. I think so, sir, but I am not sure and will have to get back to you for the record. But the other point I would make is that we are not requiring people to take sick leave. So, in other words, they don't need to go into their sick leave balance or their annual leave balance for these circumstances.

Additionally, if we have officers that, for example, are caring for an elder parent, they just need to notify us that, "Hey, I have an elder parent living in my household; I need to make sure that I don't bring any virus into the family," and we will provide accommodations for that as well.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you, sir.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Mr. CORREA. I think you want to take a moment to go through a third set of questions if I may. I want to make sure that we focus in on these issues of professional work force. I also dealt in State government. I also worked in the private sector for a long, long time. What you see today is an issue of, in the private sector, if you are sick, if you have got the flu, you have got a choice: Stay home. You don't have any coverage in terms of paid medical leave. You have got a choice: You have got to pay the mortgage, or you come to work sick. Those are some of the issues that we don't want our TSA officers to have to face.

The question of part-time or full-time, again, at the State level, we used to pay our police officers or firefighters really well because we considered them front line, the thin blue line that protected us from all of those bad things. If an officer came down or a firefighter came down with cancer or something like that, some States have what we call presumptive rules, which means you presume it is under you got cancer, you came down with a certain illness because of the nature of your work. What we are trying to do with TSO officers, at least from my perspective, is give them the same kind of benefit.

My colleagues are absolutely right: The deficit is out of control. It will be—interest on the debt is probably going to be our third-largest expense on an annual basis in this country, and we have got to make some very important choices.

At this point, I would argue fighting coronavirus, we can look at it as a budgetary issue, but it is having major repercussions on our economy. People are dying. We don't know what the extent of this issue will be for another few weeks, and looking at your work force, a very strong argument can be made that the best investment is not to be cheap, be pennywise and dollar-foolish, but to make sure that you are doing your job the best that you can do, OK. Again, Zika, Ebola; now it is corona. Next week, what is it going to be? What we want to do is create a system on-going that really is there

to address these issues going forward. A few weeks ago, we were looking at $2 billion. We just passed an $8 billion appropriation. Just within weeks, we have gone from $2 billion to $8 billion. We want to make sure we make the right investments today. Taking care of those part-time workers in terms of health care, making sure they have paid time off, medical leave, I think are good investments. Right now, in my office, we are making those decisions. Do we come in and work, or do we work from home? This coronavirus is really shaking up our society. Every day we are trying to figure out, where do we go next? So, yes, we are in a deficit situation, but if you start cutting back right now on common-sense investments, heaven knows where we are going to be in 2 or 3 weeks. We still don't know how far the extent of this infection is.

You, my friend, TSA, the airports, are our thin blue line. You are taking care of us as a society. So I want to work with you. I am trying to ask you, how much have you asked of these $8 billion because it is not being humble here. It is being aggressive enough to make sure that we are taking care of your workers, who are taking care of our passengers, who are screening individuals coming into our country. That I believe is a front line of this battle right now with corona, not only—I mean, I think it has gotten into our country. What I hear now, at least in the last 24 hours, it is not about containment. It is now about managing this issue that is all around us. Let's work together to make sure we are doing the right things at the right time and not have to look back in 3 or 4 weeks and say what we should have, could have, would have. Let's be wise in our moves.

Mr. Bishop, 5 minutes.

Mr. BISHOP. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me end on a note of agreement in the sense that I completely agree that, if there are any needs in the Department of Homeland Security that are augmented, increased by virtue of the coronavirus threat, then we ought to fund them, and they ought to be made known, and don't hesitate to seek that money, I agree with the Chairman about that. But I think it would be—I would only—I would state that agreement and I would clarify it, or perhaps a point of difference, which is don't use the crisis as an opportunity to achieve other policy objectives that aren't generated or exacerbated by the crisis. In fact, that takes some discipline.

I have had occasion to say in a subcommittee hearing in small business the other day that was interesting. I believe that we have dual responsibilities as policy makers. We have the responsibility not to underreact, and we also have the responsibility not to overreact. Both decisions could have negative implications for the country. They certainly have negative implications for budgetary concerns. Frankly, whichever way you turn on that, you can cost people's very lives, whether you underreact or overreact.

But I certainly do support the idea that our TSOs are front-line employees, much like police officers and firefighters, but it is not the case that the only folks who are putting themselves on the line to respond to this crisis are in the public sector. Nurses, physicians, technologists, folks in all manners of employment are facing difficult times because of this issue, and we need to be mindful of them all.

Thanks for the opportunity, Mr. Chairman, to say that.

Mr. CORREA. Thank you, Mr. Bishop.

I want to thank the witnesses for their time and testimony today and for addressing our questions.

The Members of the committee may have additional questions for the witnesses, and I ask that you respond expeditiously to those questions and in writing.

Without objection, the committee record shall be kept open for 10 days.

Hearing no further business, the committee stands in adjournment. Thank you very much.

[Whereupon, at 11:25 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

QUESTIONS FROM CHAIRMAN BENNIE G. THOMPSON FOR DAVID P. PEKOSKE

Question 1a. The Department of Homeland Security has finally pushed out the deadline to October 1, 2021. Both DHS and TSA have heard from Members of Congress and the growing concern of the deadline in the face of very slow issuance by States. Only about 35 percent of travelers have compliant IDs, and since DHS began its public awareness campaign that number has only increased less than 10 percent increase in about 6 months. That's not fast enough to get us where we need to be.

Any deadline if State issuance numbers of REAL ID identification documents do not increase significantly will be problematic to the aviation industry including TSA; what does that mean for airport checkpoints?

Question 1b. Will a backlog of passengers create new security vulnerabilities?

Question 1c. What contingency plans are being developed by TSA to prepare for REAL ID implementation?

Question 1d. Although the deadline has been extended, how will TSA and Department of Homeland Security use metrics and data, such as REAL ID issuance rates in States, to weigh implementation, develop an achievable time line, evaluate the impact to the economy in addition to that on airport security operations?

Answer. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is working on operational plans to help mitigate the impact REAL ID enforcement at the screening checkpoint, beginning October 1, 2021. TSA is aware that large lines of passengers either at the screening checkpoint or on the public area side create a security vulnerability at the airport, and will be collaborating with airports to develop contingency plans to handle individuals who arrive without an acceptable form of ID. The contingency plans will also provide our Federal Security Directors with options for managing the risk presented by large crowds in public spaces and checkpoint queues due to potentially low REAL ID adoption rates.

As it relates to REAL ID issuance metrics, since last summer, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has requested monthly data from the States in preparation for full enforcement of the REAL ID Act requirements. In March, the Department reported that over 103 million REAL IDs had been issued, which accounts for approximately 37 percent of all licenses issued. DHS appreciates the continued cooperation and proactive efforts of States to increase their citizens' adoption of REAL ID.

The agency believes the best way to reduce impact to the traveling public is to inform passengers what IDs they need if they want to fly. TSA will continue to educate passengers about the other forms of acceptable ID, such U.S. passports, which individuals may use to verify their ID if they do not have a REAL ID-compliant ID. TSA posts an updated list on its website, available at *https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/identification.* For reference, DHS assesses that in addition to the 103 million REAL IDs in circulation, there are also:

- 146 million U.S. passports or passport cards;
- 10 million U.S. military IDs (active duty, retired military and their dependents, and DOD civilians);
- 6.3 million Veterans Health Insurance Cards;
- 7.2 million Global Entry cards;
- 2 million NEXUS cards; and,
- 4 million enhanced driver's licenses.

These documents, and over a dozen others listed on TSA's website, can all be used to board domestic aircraft, and may alleviate some of the impact faced by States and DHS at airports. However, DHS is unable to ascertain the overlap of individuals who have a REAL ID and one of the other acceptable ID referenced above. While DHS and TSA are continuing to message the importance of obtaining a REAL ID, our goal has never been to obtain 100 percent compliance. As described above, there are millions of other documents issued which can be used for identification.

Recently, many State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) have either closed or have greatly reduced their hours due to COVID–19, which greatly impacts increased adoption as well as the additional data we can receive in the near future. Further, the significant reduction of air travel caused by COVID–19 constrains TSA's ability to educate passengers, establish time lines, and assess economic and operational impact.

Question 2a. TSA's relationship with its stakeholders has generally been collaborative and complementary. Is the agency and its stakeholders doing all that can be done to ensure that the REAL ID deadline does not cause a meltdown of the aviation system?

Question 2b. If so, why are current efforts not making much of a difference?

Question 2c. The effects of REAL ID implementation will not just be on the traveling public and airlines but will affect airports and the tourism industry at large. How seriously are you taking the effects that implementation, before the public is ready, will have on the industry, the economy, and jobs—especially as the industry and the economy may still be recovering from the novel coronavirus?

Answer. The most effective method to address the impact of REAL ID on the traveling public, flight operations, airlines, and industry is to increase the adoption rate of REAL ID before the full enforcement date, October 1, 2021. DHS and TSA have focused on raising awareness about the upcoming deadline through educational and outreach efforts to all stakeholders, including the aviation industry, travel associations, State and local governments, and the traveling public.

The agency's strategy is to leverage industry and stakeholder networks to educate the traveling public about the upcoming changes to ID requirements through a comprehensive communications campaign, media, and marketing toolkit. In April 2019, DHS and TSA launched a REAL ID public awareness campaign regarding the then October 1, 2020 deadline. In addition, Transportation Security Officers started providing advisements of the REAL ID requirement to passengers who presented a non-compliant driver's license at the security checkpoint in August 2019. TSA has steadily increased its engagement with its stakeholders, and has held meetings and discussions with airline security officials to review their individual REAL ID marketing plans. TSA held a joint press conference with industry in October 2019 to remind the traveling public of the then 1-year countdown to enforcement.

As a result of steady engagement with stakeholders, prior to the outbreak of COVID–19, several major airlines voluntarily started providing notices to their customers of the REAL ID requirements when they made a reservation. In January 2020, TSA Administrator Pekoske sent a letter to the major airlines that I was considering implementing security program changes to ensure the highest level of compliance by the enforcement date. The proposed security program changes are temporarily on hold due to the impact of COVID–19 on the airline industry.

Other efforts by the Department to increase compliance with REAL ID requirements included soliciting ideas on ways to modernize and streamline the process for the States to issue, and the public to obtain, REAL ID-compliant IDs. To that end, last fall, DHS published a public Request for Information (RFI) for proposals to streamline REAL ID issuance processing in the *Federal Register*. Over 100 proposals from 69 total submissions were received from 24 States, 17 private-sector companies, and 3 associations (American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators, National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems, and United States Travel Association). Among the submissions are proposals to streamline the manner in which applicants may submit documentation and information necessary to obtain a REAL ID license, including through the use of electronic transmission methods. Some of proposals may also achieve the goals of: (1) Following the public health guidance of social distancing by permitting Americans to obtain REAL ID cards from home, and (2) increasing the overall speed and number of REAL ID cards issued prior to the full enforcement deadline of October 1, 2021. At the request of Congressional committees, DHS provided technical drafting assistance outlining these suggested modernizations which would help increase REAL ID issuance speed and capacity for the States.

Question 3a. As concerns surrounding the effects of REAL ID implementation grow, some have proposed a number of solutions to address workarounds for passengers without REAL IDs at the checkpoint.

Would allowing trusted traveler members to travel without a compliant ID have a substantive effect on the total volume of passengers that do not have compliant IDs—or do those passengers generally have a passport or other compliant ID already?

Question 3b. Does TSA have the resources that would be needed to provide pat downs or other secondary screening to passengers without a compliant ID and still

let them through? Do you see that as a fair solution for either passengers or the front-line workforce?

Question 3c. Does TSA have the necessary resources to query databases to conduct identification verification for all those without compliant IDs at the checkpoint? Is there enough time between now and the deadline to upgrade the capabilities necessary to make this an alternative?

Answer. TSA is working on operational plans to help mitigate the impact REAL ID enforcement at the screening checkpoint, beginning October 1, 2021. TSA is aware that large lines of passengers either at the screening checkpoint or on the public area side create a security vulnerability at the airport, and will be collaborating with airports to develop contingency plans to handle individuals who arrive without an acceptable form of ID. The contingency plans will also provide our Federal Security Directors with options for managing the risk presented by large crowds in public spaces and checkpoint queues due to potentially low REAL ID adoption rates.

The agency believes that the best way to reduce impact to the traveling public is to inform passengers what IDs they need if they want to fly. TSA will continue to educate passengers about the other forms of acceptable ID, such U.S. passports, that individuals may use to verify their ID if they do not have a REAL ID-compliant ID. TSA posts an updated list on its website, available at *https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/identification.*

As it relates to REAL ID issuance metrics, since last summer, DHS has requested monthly data from the States in preparation for full enforcement of the REAL ID Act requirements. In early March, the Department reported that over 103 million REAL IDs had been issued, which accounts for approximately 37 percent of all licenses issued. DHS appreciates the continued cooperation and proactive efforts of States to increase their citizens' adoption of REAL ID. It is important to note that while 37 percent of all licenses issued are REAL ID-compliant, there are also hundreds of millions of Americans who will be able to travel on other REAL ID-compliant documents. For example, DHS assesses that in addition to 103 million REAL IDs in circulation, there are also 146 million U.S. passports or passport cards, 10 million U.S. military IDs, 7.2 million Global Entry cards, 2 million NEXUS IDs, 6.3 Veteran's Health Insurance Cards, 4 million enhanced drivers licenses. These documents can all be used to board domestic aircraft, and may alleviate some of the impact faced by States and DHS at airports.

Recently, many State DMVs have either closed or have greatly reduced their hours due to COVID–19, which greatly impacts increased adoption as well as the additional data we can receive in the near future. Further, the significant reduction of air travel caused by COVID–19 constrains TSA's ability to educate passengers, establish time lines, and assess economic and operational impact.

Question 4a. There have been calls to modernize the identification requirements to include mobile driver's licenses. I understand TSA is exploring the use and integration of mobile licenses within the security checkpoint.

Is a mobile driver's license an alternative for physical driver's license?

Question 4b. Are mobile driver's licenses currently in use at TSA? What are the use cases that industry is envisioning for mobile driver's licenses? Does TSA share industry's vision?

Question 4c. Are mobile driver's licenses ready for wide-spread use? Do they have the appropriate standards for privacy and civil liberties?

Answer. A mobile driver's license (mDL) is a digital representation of the information contained on a physical driver's license, and is typically accessed using a smartphone. An mDL is considered a complement, not an alternative, to a physical driver's license, because currently States issue mDLs to individuals only after they have been issued physical driver's licenses. Industry use cases for mDLs envision a broad range of transactions that require secure and trusted forms of identification. According to industry projections, up to 50 percent of drivers in the United States will adopt mDLs within 10 years.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION

Question 5a. In the TSA Modernization Act and a number of hearings, Congress has been clear on the importance of surface transportation and its parity with aviation. As administrator, you have realigned the organizational structure of TSA including moving Surface Operations under the Security Operations chain of command.

Can you confirm that you have successfully staffed Surface Operations to carry out their responsibilities?

Question 5b. Have you reevaluated staffing models to ensure Surface Operations has the appropriate resources?

Answer. Yes, TSA Surface Operations is operational as part of the Security Operations organizational structure. Specifically, this includes the staffing of 5 Regional Security Directors (RSDs) who have operational responsibility for the surface modes in their respective geographic areas. Surface Transportation Security Inspector annual work plans, which are published each fiscal year and administered by Surface Operations, are monitored and overseen by RSDs. RSDs bring vast executive leadership and transportation security experience to Surface Operations, which is applied to leverage Federal, State, and local partnerships across the entire surface transportation landscape, including Freight Rail, Highway Motor Carrier, Maritime, Mass Transit and Passenger Rail, Pipeline and the critical infrastructure that supports these networks.

In addition, Surface Operations is finalizing a suite of plans, such as: A high-level strategic roadmap, Regional Security Plans, and local surface security plans in and around the Nation's high-threat urban areas. Key to these plans are the risk-reducing initiatives, partnership building engagement approaches, and information and intelligence-sharing scenarios designed to strengthen the security posture of the operators and critical infrastructure in each region. While risk-reducing security initiatives are currently under way, the complete suite of plans will be completed this fiscal year. With the development of these plans, TSA will continue to evaluate staffing and resource requirements for each region.

Question 6. One of the challenges for surface transportation security is the tendency for TSA to prioritize aviation security, Surface Transportation Security Inspectors (TSI) have traditionally reported to Federal Security Directors whose focus is on aviation security. When will TSIs begin to report directly to Surface Operations?

Answer. Surface Transportation Security Inspectors (TSI) report to and receive their operational direction from Surface Operations headquarters through RSDs who have operational responsibility for the surface modes in their respective geographic areas. Surface TSI annual work plans and goals are monitored and overseen by RSDs, and together RSDs and Surface TSIs review evolving security concerns and provide no-cost TSA options to assist stakeholders in prevention efforts, including for example, facilitating security exercises, conducting security assessments, and providing security awareness training for front-line employees. In addition, Surface Operations is finalizing a suite of plans, such as: A high-level strategic roadmap, Regional Security Plans, and local surface security plans in and around the Nation's high-threat urban areas. Key to these plans are the risk-reducing initiatives, partnership building engagement approaches, and information and intelligence sharing scenarios designed to strengthen the security posture of the operators and critical infrastructure in each region. While risk-reducing security initiatives are currently under way, the complete suite of plans will be completed this fiscal year.

QUESTIONS FROM RANKING MEMBER MIKE ROGERS FOR DAVID P. PEKOSKE

Question 1a. The budget request includes a $76 million reduction in funding for technology procurement but outlines additional resources for CT coming from the Aviation Security Capital Fund.

Credential Authentication Technology (CAT) will have real-time connectivity to Secure Flight, which also includes the CDC's Do Not Board List. Given current concerns between air carriers and the CDC over passenger data related to the Coronavirus, how can CAT help the U.S. Government's response? Once TSA acquires its planned 493 CAT machines, how many checkpoints will include CAT?

Question 1b. Given these cuts, how is TSA going to move forward with fully deploying the 2,000+ CT machines that we need? How will new machines be integrated with Automated Screening Lanes to address throughput challenges? How many CTs does TSA anticipate funding through the Aviation Security Capital Fund?

Answer. At this time, no course of action on how Credential Authentication Technology (CAT) will be able to help the U.S. Government and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) related to passengers and COVID–19 concerns has been decided, although possibilities and associated concerns are being discussed. Secure Flight (SF) currently receives data from CDC's Do Not Board (DNB) list and does provide the overall do not board status via Security Technology Integrated Program (STIP) to CAT but not differentiated as "CDC" as opposed to other travelers who are not authorized to enter the sterile area. This differentiation to designate CDC DNB could be provided from SF via STIP to CAT. For CDC DNB individuals, individuals would be prevented from obtaining a boarding pass from the airline, but should the individual try to forego check-in and proceed directly to the checkpoint, or if the passenger is added to the DNB List after obtaining a boarding pass, SF

would perform a real-time update to STIP which would then pass the information to CAT, permitting identification of the traveler at the time they attempt to enter the sterile area, adding an extra layer of mitigation.

Additionally, as a way to aid the Government's response to the coronavirus, TSA is exploring options to implement a "touchless" CAT capability, which would allow passengers to scan their own identification credential and eliminate the need for a Transportation Security Officer (known as the Travel Document Checker (TDC)) to touch it. This is accomplished by reconfiguring the CAT platform to turn the document readers 180 degrees toward the passenger. The TDC must still read the CAT on-screen results and direct the passenger accordingly, but the potential for physical contact between TDC and passenger via the credential is greatly reduced. TSA is also exploring the possibility for automated validation that the photo on the credential matches the passenger presenting it.

Currently, 552 CAT units are deployed at 48 airports and cover an average of 2 checkpoints per airport. Once the next CAT procurement round is deployed, 1,053 CAT units will be deployed at 164 airports and will cover an average of 2 checkpoints per airport. For the 268 remaining airports, and any checkpoint lanes without CAT, TSA plans to continue using legacy equipment and procedures.

TSA currently has 98 initial configuration CT units deployed, with a total of 300 planned by the end of calendar year 2020, subject to COVID–19 impacts to the deployment schedule. To ensure airport lanes of all sizes can receive Checkpoint Property Screening System (CPSS) CT capabilities in a timely manner, TSA is prepared to test 3 configurations (full-size, mid-size, and base) starting in fiscal year 2020. TSA will continue to refine its strategy for CT procurement and deployment based upon testing results that demonstrate that the systems meet TSA threat detection and other requirements

Question 2. Recently, the House passed H.R. 1140, which would move TSA employees under Title 5. I expressed serious concerns around how H.R. 1140 might impact security and TSA's flexibilities under ATSA. The President's budget includes funding for TSA pay raises, bonuses, as well as retention pay at airports where it is difficult to hire screeners.

Do you believe the Senate should take up this legislation?

Answer. No, the Senate should not take up H.R. 1140. The March 2, 2020 Statement of Administration Policy (SAP) expresses the administration's strong opposition to H.R. 1140. The Aviation and Transportation Security Act (ATSA) (Pub. L. No. 107–71 (2001)), which created TSA, provides the TSA administrator with broad flexibility to manage the workforce to best accomplish the agency's security-based mission and respond to emerging threats and National emergencies. Congress recognized that "in order to ensure that Federal screeners are able to provide the best security possible, [TSA's Administrator] must be given wide latitude to determine the terms of employment of screeners." 107 H. Rpt. 296 (November 16, 2001). Through enactment of the ATSA, the President and Congress determined that flexibility not provided by Title 5 is needed to manage the TSA workforce in order to effectively carry out its security-based mission and respond to emerging threats and National emergencies. A move to Title 5 would limit those flexibilities and negatively impact TSA's ability to accomplish its mission.

Moving Transportation Security Officers (TSOs) under Title 5 could put security operations at risk by preventing TSA from effectively and quickly implementing security measures to respond to ever-changing and emergent threats. Although Title 5, Chapter 71, Labor-Management Relations does not apply to the TSA screening workforce, the TSA administrator established a labor framework that allows TSOs to be represented by a union for the purposes of engaging in collective bargaining at the National level on defined, non-security employment issues. This framework preserves the flexibility required to meet TSA's critical security mission.

Another result of placing TSA employees under Title 5 would be to make them subject to the General Schedule (GS) pay schedule. In 2018, TSA's administrator convened a Blue Ribbon Panel of public and private-sector human capital experts to conduct an independent review of the agency's human capital policy, operations, and services to identify problems and recommend solutions. The Panel specifically recommended against TSA moving to the GS pay schedule. It recommended that the better course of action would be "to use existing ATSA flexibility to improve the TSA pay system so that it operates at a level superior to the GS system."

Additionally, as stated in the SAP on H.R. 1140, the goal of providing TSA employees with competitive compensation and benefits "should be accomplished . . . through the budget, rather than through a statutory reclassification of TSA's workforce." The fiscal year 2021 budget requests funding to implement 2 workforce initiatives that represent a significant long-term commitment to the screening workforce and are permissible because of ATSA's flexibilities. First, the

fiscal year 2021 budget seeks $11.3 million for the second phase of TSO Career Progression, to enable TSA to provide pay increases to TSOs who demonstrate higher skill levels in checkpoint operations. Additionally, the fiscal year 2021 budget includes a request for $23.6 million for Service Pay to fund predictable, annual pay increases for TSOs who demonstrate service experience and acquire new skills. Given the evolving nature of threats to transportation security, TSOs must continually master new technologies and learn new skills. The Service Pay initiative builds upon the TSO Career Progression initiative and compensates TSOs for the skills acquisition and professional growth built in to the requirements of the TSA position. Neither program would be options if H.R. 1140 were enacted.

In addition to the pay and administrative burdens, transitioning the TSA workforce to Title 5 would significantly increase on-going operational costs and be logistically challenging. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) determined, just days before the House voted on H.R. 1140, after the bill had advanced through the committee process, that the cost associated with the bill would be $1.8 billion over 5 years. In addition to the dramatic cost increases to transition to Title 5, H.R. 1140 requires TSA to transition to Title 5 no later than 6 months after enactment, a time frame likely not possible considering that all TSA positions would require a classification review consistent with OPM Classification Standards in order to be converted. A hurried transition could present challenges meeting deadlines, incomplete or inaccurate policy guidance, as well as adversely affect the TSA workforce.

Question 3. Since TSA Travel Document Checkers will be responsible for denying travelers who do not present REAL ID-compliant licenses/IDs access to the checkpoint, has the agency evaluated if any additional staff will be necessary to perform the function? How does TSA plan to handle significant volumes of confused or angry travelers?

Answer. TSA is assessing if additional staff will be needed when REAL ID card-based enforcement begins at the screening checkpoint on October 1, 2021. TSA will work collaboratively with airports to develop contingency plans to handle individuals without acceptable forms of ID. The contingency plans will also provide our Federal Security Directors with options for managing the risk presented by large crowds in public spaces and checkpoint queues due to potentially low REAL ID adoption rates.

The agency believes the best way to reduce impact to the traveling public and to prevent large lines at the airport is to inform passengers what IDs they need if they want to fly before they arrive at the airport. TSA will continue to educate passengers about the other forms of acceptable ID, such U.S passports, that individuals may use to verify their ID if they do not have a REAL ID-compliant ID. TSA posts an updated list on its website, available at *https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/identification.*

Further, DHS and TSA are working to leverage industry and stakeholder networks to educate the traveling public about the upcoming changes to ID requirements through a comprehensive communications campaign, media, and marketing tool kit. In April 2019, DHS and TSA launched a REAL ID public awareness campaign regarding the then October 1, 2020 deadline. In addition, Transportation Security Officers started providing advisements of the REAL ID requirement to passengers who presented a non-compliant driver's license at the security checkpoint in August 2019. TSA has steadily increased its engagement with its stakeholders, and has held meetings and discussions with airline security officials to review their individual REAL ID marketing plans.

Question 4. Does TSA intend to ask Congress for additional funding to acquire CT machines with Automated Screening Lanes in order to mitigate threats to aviation?

Answer. TSA will continue to refine its strategy for CT procurement and deployment based upon system qualification and when industry presents systems that demonstrate they meet TSA requirements.

Question 5a. Last year the TSA demonstrated "detection at range" technology at DFW Airport for employee screening, how did that trial go? What were the results?

Question 5b. Will this information be incorporated into the forthcoming TSA Insider Threat Strategy?

Question 5c. Is anything keeping airports from buying this equipment and deploying? If not, how is TSA encouraging airports to employ next generation, employee screening equipment?

Answer. TSA entered into a partnership with Dallas/Fort Worth International (DFW) Airport Authority to demonstrate the Thruvision People Screening Camera, a novel on-person screening solution that does not emit any energy and is able to screen individuals from up to 25 feet away. The demonstration began on November 1, 2019 and ended on January 31, 2020; data collection occurred from January 6–11, 2020.

TSA's main objective was to partner with DFW airport authority to co-demonstrate Thruvision to identify a potentially viable solution that could be used for employee screening and insider threat mitigation. TSA also sought to assess the unique capabilities that this technology provides, such as real-time alarm resolution and screening-at-speed. The demonstration produced useful lessons learned for both TSA and DFW. These included 8 recommendations to increase efficiency and effectiveness associated with the operation of the system by DFW Security Officers (not Transportation Security Officers). Recommendations focused on training, procedures compliance, and alarm resolution practices. TSA also completed a human factors assessment in which the users/operators of the demonstrated technology (DFW Security Officers) noted trust in the system, its ability to identify anomalies and resolve them in real time, and significant improvement in the employee screening experience.

The Insider Threat Roadmap provides a strategic plan to guide TSA and the transportation community in mitigating insider risk, building on the expertise, leadership, and relationships TSA has developed to streamline processes, identify requirements and capabilities, and leverage partnerships to proactively mitigate risks of the insider threat. It is a strategic priority to disseminate and promote adoption of insider threat best practices and industry standards with key stakeholders, for which this technology has potential application.

TSA does not have policies that either promote or inhibit the purchase of technology for employee screening. Only equipment that is listed on the TSA Acceptable Capability List (ACL) can be bought and deployed by airports to screen passengers and sterile area tenants (i.e. a specific airport employee category) for the purposes of allowing them into the sterile area. The ACL serves as the official list of capability currently able to be procured by airports and donated to TSA under the Capability Acceptance Process. Capabilities included on the ACL can be operated in a screening environment as TSA has performed applicable testing, determined that the capability meets requirements, and received approval to deploy the technology as required by DHS policy.

Question 6. I understand that detection at range technology could greatly reduce pat-downs and already received an initial positive privacy assessment (PIA). Why isn't this technology being deployed at the checkpoint to improve detection and privacy?

Answer. TSA recently renewed its Privacy Threshold Analysis for "Stand-off Detection" and is in the process of updating its privacy impact assessment. While "Detection at Range" technology is promising and may reduce the overall need for pat-down resolution, current statutes and regulations preclude use of the technology in current form from being used for screening the traveling public. "Detection at Range" or "Standoff Detection" technology to be used for screening purposes currently falls under the definition of advanced imaging technology (AIT) under 49 U.S.C. 44901(I)(1)(A) and, therefore, must meet the requirements for use of AIT to screen passengers, including the requirement that any image created by the technology must produce a "generic image of the individual being screened that is the same as the images produced for all other screened individuals" (i.e., an avatar). The statutory definitions and requirements for use were codified in TSA's regulations at 49 CFR § 1540.107(d). The technology being referenced does not employ an avatar. Noting such, TSA is exploring the use of "Detection at Range" technology to screen aviation workers for insider threat once it is formally qualified, has demonstrated this type of technology in mass transit test beds, and will consider lessons learned from those efforts for aviation security applications. Should legal constraints change, TSA will look to expand the use of "Detection at Range" technology to the checkpoint.

Question 7a. "Detection at Range" technology which uses the body's heat signature, sounds entirely different than the "stand-in" AIT machines now in airports which map the body using radiation. Why is TSA making this technology conform to AIT standards? Shouldn't TSA set up new standards and requirements?

Question 7b. Why is TSA treating them as the same?

Answer. Under current law, "Detection at Range" technology is subject to the standards and requirements of the current AIT program. Should the law change, TSA will work to create a parallel program to AIT that focuses on "Detection at Range" solutions.

While "Detection at Range" technology is promising and may reduce the overall need for pat-down resolution, current statutes and regulations preclude use of the technology in current form from being used for screening the traveling public. "Detection at Range" or "Standoff Detection" technology to be used for screening purposes currently falls under the definition of AIT under 49 U.S.C. 44901(I)(1)(A) and, therefore, must meet the requirements for use of AIT to screen passengers, includ-

ing the requirement that any image created by the technology must produce a "generic image of the individual being screened that is the same as the images produced for all other screened individuals" (i.e., an avatar). The statutory definitions and requirements for use were codified in TSA's regulations at 49 CFR § 1540.107(d). The "Detection at Range" technology does not employ an avatar. In addition, equipment used for screening passengers must be certified and qualified to TSA standards by an independent third party in order to be used for screening the traveling public. This process ensures that all technology used by TSA is safe, efficient, noninvasive, detects threats at a high level, and meets specified operational requirements. TSA is also exploring the use of "Detection at Range" technology to screen aviation workers for insider threat once it is formally qualified, has demonstrated this type of technology in mass transit test beds, and will consider lessons learned from those efforts for aviation security applications. Should legal constraints change, TSA will look to expand the use of "Detection at Range" technology to the checkpoint.

Question 8. What is the status of the Future Lane Experience (FLEx) Program and deployment of next generation, screen at speed technology? Why haven't we been able to deploy stand-off screening in at least a demonstration mode?

Answer. The Future Lane Experience (FLEx) project was established in response to the TSA Modernization Act (Pub. L. 115–254, October 5, 2018) section 1938, which mandated a Risk Modified Screening Pilot. Those pilots are complete and helped inform TSA's ability to transition all of its TSA PreCheck® lanes to only service individuals with known traveler numbers in accordance with the TSA Modernization Act. TSA completed this transition on March 27, 2020 and provided notice to Congress on April 6, 2020.

In fall 2018 the Innovation Task Force (ITF) posted a problem statement and identified a variety of screening-at-speed solutions that were selected for demonstration planning as part of the regular solution demonstration life cycle. As part of the closeout of the demonstrations, ITF plans to share data gathered to inform requirements development and capability roadmaps. TSA is currently exploring the use of "Detection at Range" technology to screen aviation workers for insider threats and conducted a pilot at DFW that concluded in January 2020. TSA also sought to demonstrate the unique capabilities that this technology provides, such as real-time alarm resolution and screening-at-speed. From both of these perspectives, the demonstration was successful and operator feedback was extremely positive. The combined efforts of the FLEx initiative and ITF further TSA's objectives for enhanced passenger screening experience through introduction of new procedural and technological dynamic screening capabilities to achieve a modern, adaptable checkpoint.

Question 9. Based on the recent GAO reports (GAO–20–56), there is no requirement to ensure that screening technologies continue to meet detection requirements after deployment and it was shown that some systems, while undergoing daily calibrations and maintenance, failed to meet detection certification standards when tested at the Transportation Security Lab (TSL). What is the status of the TSA strategy for monitoring performance of screening technologies in live operation at our Nation's airports?

Answer. TSA's strategy for monitoring performance of screening technologies in live operation at our Nation's airports is documented in the Post-Implementation Review (PIR) and Periodic Review Policy dated 28 April 2020. This policy provides supplemental instructions for TSA reviews to fulfill the requirements set forth in the DHS Acquisition Management Instruction 102–01. It defines the reviews to be conducted, sets minimum requirements, identifies stakeholders' responsibilities and establishes a governance structure for the planning, execution, and reporting of technology-specific plans. The technology-specific plan will be developed by the appropriate program office for each system based on its individual capabilities and functionalities detailing the frequency and scope of the reviews.

Question 10. The TSA Modernization Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–254) required the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to develop a strategy to diversify the security technology industry marketplace, including small business innovators. What steps has TSA taken to establish an open architecture environment for future technology procurements, including the latest Checkpoint CT procurement to allow for a much broader industrial base to support TSA's mission?

Answer. Pursuant to the TSA Modernization Act, TSA developed a strategy to diversify the security technology marketplace. Consistent with this strategy, TSA continues to fund and support system development with approved CT vendors to improve detection, implement automated-conveyance functionality, and adopt open architecture work streams for future technology procurements. The following efforts should allow for a broader industrial base, including small business innovators and third-party vendors, to support TSA's mission:

1. Continued development of the Digital Imaging and Communications in Security (DICOS) data standard to establish an open and non-proprietary data format for collecting sensor data. This will support the ability of both original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and third-party vendors to develop algorithms as the information will be provided in a standardized format that is available to all.
2. Detection algorithm development efforts requiring the OEMs to partner with third-party developers to expand the detection capabilities of the CT systems.
3. Established DICOS Tool Kits to support each CT system OEM convert their sensor output into a DICOS-compliant format.
4. DICOS and DICOS Tool Kits have been incorporated as a functional requirement for the CPSS acquisition. This means the next checkpoint CT procurement requires the systems to generate and export DICOS-compliant scan files.
5. Continued development of the Open Platform Software Library (OPSL), a standardized and open interface protocol that allows for communication across devices. The OPSL will move transportation security equipment to modular designs and thus remove vendor locks.
6. Stream of commerce data collection effort is a focused TSA initiative to collect data from the CT systems in the DICOS format to allow for algorithm development by existing OEMs and third-party vendors.
7. Common workstation initiative is focused on leveraging the DICOS and OPSL effort to establish a standard user workstation and to support the development of an optimal user interface. This will allow TSA to leverage a single workstation regardless of the CT purchased and permit training and procedures to be developed once and be useable across any CT unit purchases.
8. Checkpoint Automation project is focused on leveraging DICOS and OPSL to demonstrate the ability to transfer system scan information using DICOS to a separate server, process that scan information using a third-party algorithm, and return the algorithm results to a common workstation. The goal is to conduct these steps within an operationally viable time frame.

In addition to the development of underlying enablers to an open and modular framework, TSA has multiple engagement activities with the technology industry marketplace to support incorporating small business innovators. TSA holds industry days to discuss upcoming needs and support networking across OEMs and third-party vendors, participates in industry events like those hosted by the Aviation Security Advisory Committee, and technology demonstration opportunities provided through the TSA Innovation Task Force Innovative Demonstrations for Enterprise Advancement Targeted Broad Agency Announcement.

QUESTIONS FROM CHAIRMAN BENNIE G. THOMPSON FOR KARL L. SCHULTZ

ARCTIC SECURITY

Question 1a. Other branches of the military have testified to Congress in recent weeks of a need to re-evaluate the strategy in the Arctic. We have held a series of hearings and briefings on Arctic security this Congress to highlight the activities of our adversaries in the Arctic and the need for additional Coast Guard assets and resources to maintain our National security interests at our northernmost border. I am pleased the budget request includes funding for a second Polar Security Cutter (PSC) to support these activities.

How are you coordinating and strategizing with the Navy and other military branches to ensure an appropriately coordinated approach to securing the Arctic?

Question 1b. The Coast Guard released a Coast Guard-specific Arctic strategy last year, but the United States lacks a Government-wide strategy and DHS lacks a Department-wide strategy. Is there anyone at the DHS headquarters level developing an Arctic security strategy for the Department?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

DRUG INTERDICTIONS

Question 2. According to a briefing paper on drug overdose deaths in the United States published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in January of this year, "From 2012 through 2018, the rate of drug overdose deaths involving cocaine more than tripled." Most of the cocaine headed toward the United States moves initially at sea. The Coast Guard has testified that it believes it is aware of about 80 percent of these drug movements, but only has resources to target about 20 percent of those for interdiction.

What are the Coast Guard's targets for cocaine removal rates in fiscal year 2021? How much money would it take to enable the Coast Guard to achieve its cocaine removal rate targets?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

IT SECURITY

Question 3a. During this year's State of the Coast Guard Address and in your testimony, you have sounded the alarm about the frighteningly inadequate nature of the Coast Guard's communications systems and the growing vulnerability of Coast Guard personnel carrying out operations that depend upon an unreliable system that could fail them at any moment. It is hard for Congress to do its job and fund the Coast Guard correctly if you're not clear about what you need and how much it will really cost.

You mentioned that the fiscal year 2021 budget proposal is a first step to fixing the Coast Guard's IT infrastructure. How much more funding is needed to ensure the Coast Guard's readiness to meet its mission and bring its communications infrastructure into the 21st Century?

Question 3b. Is this a problem in the other military services?

Answer. Response was not received at the time of publication.

