



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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TSA MUST CONTINUE STAFFING EXIT LANES AT AIRPORTS IN THE NAME OF SAFETY

New plan beginning next month will dump \$8 million annually in added security costs on NYC area airports

(NEW YORK NEW JERSEY): The Transportation Safety Administration must continue to staff airport security exit lanes and abandon its plan to unload costs and responsibility onto already financially-strained local airports, the Global Gateway Alliance said today. The GGA's full letter to TSA Administrator John Pistole is attached below.

The TSA plans to eliminate federal agents at airport security lane exits and force airport operators to pick up the added security costs in early 2014, calling it a cost-saving measure that allows the Administration to focus on outgoing plane traffic.

Over the last decade, Homeland Security data shows that there have been 3,000 security breaches nationwide involving unscreened individuals gaining unauthorized access via exit lanes and security checkpoints. Locally, in 2010 and 2012, unauthorized access through exit lanes at Newark Liberty Airport shut down the terminal for hours, causing delays and costing money during busy travel times.

GGA said the step will push an additional \$8 million annually onto regional airports and create additional security concerns for the region at a moment when New York / New Jersey airports will be inundated with tens of thousands of additional travelers for the Super Bowl.

While the TSA describes the idea as cost effective, their plan saves approximately one percent of the TSA's \$7.5 billion budget nationwide, while impacting the security of hundreds of millions of aviation passengers every year. In addition, the plan to abandon staffing of exit lanes comes at a time when TSA is working to

increase security fees on every airline ticket – effectively adding costs for passengers while reducing security.

The TSA plan already faces opposition from the Port Authority, the major airlines, national airline advocacy groups, as well as other cities including Boston, Las Vegas, Minneapolis, Philadelphia and Portland.

"Our message to the TSA is clear - stop this plan. Their move is the embodiment of pennywise and pound foolish - impacting the maximum number of passengers while placing additional burdens on our local airports," said **GGA Chairman Joe Sitt**. "The Federal government should be paying its fair share to the most critical airport system in the country, not further shirking its responsibility."

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ABOUT GGA

Global Gateway Alliance (GGA), was established to address the major challenges facing the metropolitan region's airports and related infrastructure that, if left unaddressed, will serve as a major impediment to the long-term growth of New York City and surrounding areas. By harnessing the expertise of leaders in business, government, academia, labor and other sectors, we seek to tackle these challenges head-on and serve as the leading advocate in an effort to improve our airports and facilitate the continued growth of the region. For more information regarding the Global Gateway Alliance, please visit www.globalgatewayalliance.org. Follow GGA on Twitter @GGA_NYNJ and 'Like' the organization on Facebook at <http://on.fb.me/UsqxGw>.

GGA's board of directors includes: **Joe Sitt** (Chairman), CEO, Thor Equities; **Stuart Appelbaum**, President of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union; **Chris Giamo**, Regional President for TD Bank; **Dan Glickman** former Congressman and U.S. Agriculture Secretary; **David Hopkins**, Senior Director of Aviation at the New York City Economic Development Corporation; **Jared Kushner**, Owner of Kushner Properties and the New York Observer; **George Miranda**, Teamsters' International Vice President; **Mitchell Moss**, Henry Hart Rice Professor of Urban Policy and Planning at the Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service at New York University; **William Rudin**, CEO of Rudin Management Company, Inc. and Chairman of ABNY; **Joseph Spinnato**, President of the Hotel Association of New York City; **Alvin S. Trenk**, Chairman and CEO of Air Pegasus Corp; **Peter Ward**, President of the Hotel Trades Council on New York; **Kathryn Wylde**, President of the Partnership for New York City, and **Tim Zagat**, Co-Founder and Co-Chair of Zagat Survey-

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December 8, 2013

Administrator John S. Pistole
Transportation Security Administration
Department of Homeland Security
601 South 12th Street
Arlington, VA 20598

Dear Administrator Pistole:

We are writing to call on TSA to rescind the plan abandoning staffing at security exit lanes throughout the nation's airports, including the New York New Jersey region, as of January 1.

The TSA has argued that exit lanes are not part of its mandate to protect the safety of outgoing planes. Nothing could be further from the truth. We've already seen numerous examples of high profile security breaches via exit lanes. The most infamous of these took place at a New York area airport in 2010 when a non-passenger used an exit lane at Newark Liberty to escort his date to the gate and steal a "last kiss," shutting down the terminal for multiple hours during one of the busiest travel periods of the year. And Newark experienced a similar breach as recently as 2012, again shutting down a major airport terminal for hours due to a non-passenger entering through an exit lane.

There is more than just this anecdotal evidence of the threat that exit lanes pose to the secure area of airport terminals. Over the last decade, Department of Homeland Security data shows almost 3,000 security breaches involving an unscreened individual gaining unauthorized access to the "sterile area" via exit lanes and screening checkpoints.

Just as critically, the exit lanes are used for authorized personnel to access the secure area, along with arriving passengers leaving through them. Tens of thousands of pre-screened and badged airport workers around the country utilize the lanes each day to gain entry to the secure area. The fact is they are additional entry lanes as well as exit lanes.

The TSA also describes the idea as cost effective, but the savings simply aren't worth the risks. The savings are estimated at \$88 million annually to the TSA. When TSA's budget exceeds \$7.5 billion and it is responsible for ensuring the safety of hundreds of millions of aviation passengers every year, the move is the embodiment of "pennywise and pound foolish."

Lastly, the TSA wants to push the responsibility, and costs, for exit lane security onto local airport operators. New York metropolitan airports form the largest airport system in the country. Yet for decades, the Federal government has short-changed New York airports on services, capital investments and a host of other areas relative to our size and contribution to national air travel. The Port Authority and airlines have been forced to

pick up the slack, investing billions of their own resources in terminal modernization, runways, transportation on airport, and customer service.

Dumping an estimated \$8 million in new local costs to what should be a federal responsibility is putting injury on top of injury. The Federal government should be paying its fair share to the most critical airport system in the country, not further shirking its responsibility.

There is almost universal opposition to TSA's planned move among the aviation community. In New York, the Port Authority and the major airlines are against it. Leading national advocacy groups including Airlines for America, Airports Council International, American Association of Airport Executives, and the Regional Airline Association have written to Congress to stop the plan. Numerous local airports have filed lawsuits against the plan, and major hubs across the country like Portland, Las Vegas, Minneapolis, Philadelphia and Boston are each on record in opposition. Las Vegas went as far as to say it would lead to the closure of exit lanes.

We also want to make special mention of Super Bowl XLVIII, taking place on February 3. TSA is planning to make this major change in airport security smack in the middle of tens of thousands of extra visitors arriving in the New York New Jersey region, when the entire world will be watching. This seems like a prescription for another TSA embarrassment.

For all of these reasons, we urge you to reconsider this decision, and to continue meeting TSA's mandate by ensuring that only screened passengers are in the post-security area of airport terminals.

Sincerely,

Joe Sitt
Chairman, GGA
CEO, Thor Equities

Mitchell Moss
Board Member, GGA
Director, NYU Rudin Center for
Transportation Policy & Management

Stuart Applebaum
Vice-President, GGA
President, Retail, Wholesale, & Department Store Union

Stephen Sigmund
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Jen Hensley
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Kathryn Wylde
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CEO, Partnership for New York City

George Miranda
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International VP & President
Joint Council 16, Teamsters

Tim Zagat
Board Member, GGA
Co-Founder & Co-Chair, Zagat Survey