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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
AND TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125

WEBSITE: <https://commerce.senate.gov>

March 1, 2021

The Honorable David P. Pekoske
Administrator
Transportation Security Administration
601 South 12th Street
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Administrator Pekoske:

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Quiet Skies program was established in 2012 to provide enhanced screening of certain passengers unknown to TSA that might present an elevated risk to the transportation system. In 2018, the program was expanded to include observation of such passengers beyond the security screening checkpoint in the airport and on flights by the Federal Air Marshal Service (FAMS). A November 25, 2020, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Inspector General (OIG) audit report of the TSA Quiet Skies program, *TSA Needs to Improve Management of the Quiet Skies Program (OIG-21-11)*, found that “TSA did not properly plan, implement, and manage the Quiet Skies program to meet the program’s mission of mitigating the threat to commercial aviation posed by higher risk passengers.” The report issued two recommendations addressing a lack of performance metrics ensuring accountability and a lack of oversight of the program.

I am encouraged by TSA’s concurrence with the OIG report’s two recommendations, and urge swift implementation. The OIG report demonstrates the need for the Senate Commerce Committee to continue its vigorous oversight of the Quiet Skies program. To help inform the Committee’s oversight, please respond to the following questions:

1. What outcomes does the Quiet Skies program seek to achieve, and how will TSA develop these outcomes into objective, quantifiable, and measurable program goals?
2. What specifically is TSA doing to measure the performance and effectiveness of the Quiet Skies program in accomplishing its mission?
3. What oversight measures is TSA implementing to supervise the ongoing execution of the Quiet Skies program?

4. How does TSA measure and ensure the effectiveness of using FAMS resources for the Quiet Skies program?
5. How can TSA improve the mission effectiveness of FAMS deployments as part of the Quiet Skies program?

I appreciate your prompt attention to this important matter and look forward to working with you to ensure America's air transportation system remains safe, secure, and efficient.

Sincerely,



Roger F. Wicker
Ranking Member