

Oppose Merkley/Kennedy Amendment #2000

WHAT THE AMENDMENT DOES.

Enforces a complete and total ban on TSA's use of Facial Recognition Technology (FRT) until TSA complies with costly and unworkable requirements.

This would create an intense period of travel chaos, as TSA retrains staff, removes and redeploys technology, reconfigures screening lanes, and races to comply with the amendment. As a result, TSA resources and staffing would be impossibly constrained by this amendment.

Bans use of FRT for non-trusted travelers and stops expansion of FRT to new airports until May 2027.

Stops expansion and enrollment in Touchless PreCheck Identity Solution beyond the existing customers and six airports where it's in use today (ATL, DTW, LAX, LGA, JFK and ORD).

Creates an unrealistic, costly, and unworkable framework for how TSA can use FRT in the future, including:

Offering manual ID checks as the default option for all passengers, and as the only option for non-PreCheck passengers; and

Offering FRT only if passengers are first offered manual ID checks and then opt-in to using FRT.

Prevents TSA from storing biometric data for more than 12 hours, which TSA already does.

THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS.

Dangerously undermines national security.

TSA's FRT technology is 98%+ accurate according to NIST, which is significantly higher than the accuracy of manual ID checks.

The amendment effectively bans TSA's use of FRT for non-trusted travelers, forcing the agency to use "college-bar style" identity checks for a national security purpose.

By having different ID verification procedures across all airports, the amendment creates a significant security vulnerability by allowing dangerous individuals to choose airports with weaker security standards.

Creates chaos and long wait times at U.S. airports.

Millions of hours wasted in TSA lines. The amendment would cause Americans to collectively wait an additional 120 million hours per year at TSA checkpoints.

Eliminates the efficiency benefits of PreCheck. Significantly slows down PreCheck lanes by requiring cumbersome procedures for ID checks, such as requiring all passengers to be offered a manual ID check first.

Halts efficiency and modernization of TSA screening: The amendment halts the expansion of Touchless PreCheck Identity Solution, which more than doubles the throughput at TSA checkpoints and is the most promising technology for quick and secure screening experience.