

# U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION

On behalf of U.S. Travel Association, a national organization representing all components of the travel industry, we write to respectfully urge Congress to utilize a comprehensive approach to alleviate travel congestion and help the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) more effectively manage its workforce. Proven trusted traveler programs and TSA's public-private partnership through the Registered Traveler Program are crucially important to rebuilding trust in the government's ability to fulfill its security and facilitation missions amidst the recent, and possibly future, partial government shutdown.

Travel and tourism in the United States generates \$2.4 trillion in economic output and supports 15.6 million American jobs. In 2011, the TSA launched Precheck, which is widely recognized as one of the most popular and effective public-facing federal programs. The program improves aviation security, facilitates secure travel and reduces congestion at U.S. airports. The recently passed FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 included important reforms to assist with the expansion of the Precheck program, including new ways for consumers to enroll.

Regrettably, the recent lapse in federal appropriations placed considerable stress on the TSA workforce. U.S. Travel and its members are concerned about the long-term impact on the TSA workforce at a time when the agency is attempting to bolster its staff for the spring and summer travel seasons of 2019. TSA staff morale and attrition has been an ongoing issue for the agency. Now that the problem is exacerbated, it is vital we invest even more in the TSA Precheck program as well as continue with the Registered Traveler Program to help alleviate the strained Transportation security officer (TSO) workforce and recruitment process. We urge Congress to:

- Require TSA to spend more of its unobligated TSA Precheck funding on expedited enrollment efforts.
- Require TSA to offer volume discounts and a streamlined enrollment process.
- Require TSA to allow individuals with security clearances an opt into TSA Precheck.
- Urge TSA to allow enrollees to pay under a subscription model so that the cost of the application better aligns with the benefits received.

Enrolling more people in TSA Precheck and utilizing the Registered Traveler Program would improve security, ease congestion at checkpoints and provide long-term relief to the agency as it prepares for a projected surge in travel later this year.

We appreciate your attention to this issue and stand ready to partner with Congress as it seeks improvements to aviation security while bolstering travel and tourism in the United States.

Best,

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U.S. Travel Association