

**The Honorable Robert Aderholt  
Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Homeland Security**

**Opening Statement:  
*TSA FY 2012 Budget***

**Witness:**

**Assistant Secretary/Administrator Pistole**

**10:00 AM | Tuesday | March 15, 2011 | B308 RHOB**

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This morning we welcome John Pistole, Administrator of the Transportation Security Administration, for his first appearance before this Subcommittee.

Today we will examine the President's fiscal year 2012 budget to fund TSA in its mission to protect our transportation systems from threats, sabotage, and other acts of violence, and help ensure the free flow of travelers and commerce. Administrator, we thank you for coming today and look forward to hearing your testimony.

This year TSA will observe its tenth anniversary, a decade marked by rapid change, a measure of success – and a few false starts. Initially driven by the need to close gaps in aviation security following the 9/11 attacks, TSA grew rapidly into an organization of over 60,000 personnel – most of them performing screening at airport security checkpoints, previously a job for airports and airlines. Today, TSA's large and diverse workforce includes inspectors and Federal Air Marshals who travel extensively to ensure security of flights and the aviation system, and specialists dedicated to surface transportation security.

I know TSA's workforce strives to be conscientious and enterprising, and we acknowledge their hard work and commitment to keeping travel safe and secure. However, the other side of the workforce issue is to ensure there is the right mix of staff and technology at checkpoints and throughout the travel environment.

TSA must restrain its appetite for solving problems by adding personnel and increasing operating costs.

Instead, TSA's challenge, in the foreseeable, thrifty future, is to realize the highest degree of security, at the lowest possible cost. It's a duty each federal agency – even those with vital security missions – must embrace.

New security threats from overseas pushed TSA and its sister agencies into the headlines last year, to include explosives concealed in a traveler's underwear and in printer cartridges intended to blow up an aircraft over Chicago.

Regrettably, your agency's progress in addressing these daunting challenges is undercut by the budgetary sleight-of-hand of your FY12 budget request. Once again, TSA is proposing a

hypothetical offset: \$590 million through a proposed, but not enacted, increase in passenger fees that the authorizing committee has unequivocally rejected.

We are eager to hear you explain how TSA can keep current programs whole, let alone take on new initiatives, with such a large budgetary albatross – over 10% of your budget.

Administrator Pistole, in this time of fiscal crisis, the first thing we need from the Administration is truth in budgeting. Budget gimmicks like this do not cut it.

In addition to discussing your options under this budgetary handicap, we expect to learn about the progress in TSA's major efforts to streamline and reinvent the security process for aviation security in the wake of new threats.

You shared with the American Bar Association recently your vision of a more “risk-based” approach to screening passengers, rather than the current “one size fits all.” As TSA, like all government agencies, faces leaner times, should re-inventing the passenger security model be given more immediate consideration?

Your major acquisition of passenger screening systems depends on having automated target recognition technology in place – which, in turn, will affect the size and mix of TSA's screener workforce. But this technology is still undergoing testing.

Administrator, I expect to hear today how your investment plan will get results. We need to know how to make TSA's systems more efficient and reliable, with a better mix of technology and manpower.

I look forward to a productive relationship as we work together to get your balance right: to have the *right* number of transportation security professionals, with the *right* tools and technology, helping to keep Americans, and all others who use our system, safe and secure.

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