



NEWS RELEASE

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Transportation Labor Endorses Bill to Raise Security Standards for Outsourced Aircraft Repair Work

Reps. Langevin, Thompson and Jackson Lee introduce bill imposing new penalties for inaction

Washington, D.C. – Transportation unions announced their support for legislation (H.R. 1981) introduced today to force the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to stop ignoring a two-and-a-half year old congressional mandate to issue security rules for FAA-certified third-party repair facilities that work on U.S. aircraft.

“These agencies have ignored a bipartisan congressional mandate to ensure the highest security standards at contract repair facilities used by our airlines,” said Edward Wytkind, president of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD). “Our government has the responsibility to ensure that the heavy overhaul work outsourced to foreign facilities doesn’t threaten the safety and security of American travelers and aviation workers.”

The legislation was introduced by Rep. Jim Langevin, Chair of the Emerging Threats Subcommittee, Rep. Bennie Thompson, Chair of the Homeland Security Committee, and Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, Chair of the Transportation Security Subcommittee. These lawmakers are responding to the lack of TSA and FAA oversight and regulation of third-party repair facilities at a time when, according to a 2005 Department of Transportation Inspector General report, U.S. air carriers are outsourcing more than 50 percent of their aircraft overhaul and maintenance work.

“This legislation sends a clear message that Congress will no longer tolerate what amounts to a dereliction of duty by TSA and FAA regulators,” Wytkind said. “We applaud and support this effort by House Homeland Security Committee leaders to force this Administration to comply with a clear security directive.”

Langevin’s bill would require the TSA to act on earlier requirements it has ignored to impose security rules and audits on contract repair stations. If TSA does not issue final security regulations within 60 days from enactment, it must issue an order prohibiting the use of foreign repair stations. Audits of foreign stations would have to be completed nine months after the regulations are issued. The bill also dictates that regulations issued by TSA would ensure “comparable security standards” between work done by air carrier employees and work done at contract repair stations.

Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO

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Congress first mandated in 2003 that the TSA, in consultation with the FAA, address security concerns related to third-party contractor work and draft new security standards for foreign and domestic aircraft repair stations by August 2004. Following the approval of the new rules, the TSA was to conduct security audits of foreign stations. None of this has happened.

“This bill shouldn’t be necessary – Congress has already spoken,” Wytkind added. “But because this Administration is thumbing its nose at the laws Congress passes, Congress must insist that our government lives up to its responsibility to protect the flying public.”

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TTD represents 32 member unions in the aviation, rail, transit, trucking, highway, longshore, maritime and related industries. For more information, visit www.ttd.org.