

# TTD NEWS RELEASE

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## Time to Reconsider Flawed TWIC Program

WASHINGTON, DC—*Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD) President Edward Wytkind issues this statement regarding the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) program, the subject of a hearing today by the House Subcommittee on Border and Maritime Security:*

“It is time for Congress and the Department of Homeland Security to institute immediate and significant changes to the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) program.

“As the Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently concluded, after 11 years since the TWIC program was first conceived, with 2.3 million cards issued and hundreds of millions of dollars spent, the security benefits of this initiative have not been demonstrated. While the GAO has suggested yet another ‘assessment’ to confirm what we already know – that the program is inherently flawed – we believe a more direct course change is warranted.

“First, the requirement that TWIC operate as a biometric credential with electronic readers must be removed. We have always been skeptical that this mandate was appropriate in a maritime environment. Even the Coast Guard, in its pending proposed rule, only seeks to mandate readers at a small percentage of facilities that pose the highest security risk. After the conclusion of the mismanaged pilot program, countless reports and studies and our own members’ experience, it is clear that TWIC readers should not be mandated at any facility and the program as currently conceived simply does not work.

“Second, any threat assessment process, including criminal background check reviews, must be reformed. Too many of our members have been prevented from going to work because of inaccurate records and forced to spend their time and money to correct criminal information. It has become clear that this byzantine process is not serving the nation’s interests and distracts attention from genuine security risks.

“As this debate unfolds, we will insist that current due process rights provided by federal law are retained and that any credentialing program strikes the right balance between enhancing security and recognizing the realities of port and maritime commerce. Clearly, the TWIC program does not pass this most basic test.”

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*The Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, represents 33 member unions in the aviation, rail, transit, motor carrier, highway, longshore, maritime and related industries. For more information, visit us at [www.ttd.org](http://www.ttd.org) or on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).*