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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

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April 2, 2013

The Honorable John S. Pistole
Administrator
Transportation Security Administration
601 South 12th Street
Arlington, VA 20598

Dear Administrator Pistole:

I am writing to express concern in the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) recent decision to allow passengers to bring knives inside aircraft cabins without engaging stakeholders directly impacted by the change in policy.

The tragic events of September 11, 2001 were due in part to the ability of hijackers to use knives, mace, and box cutters to attack passengers and crew. After 9/11, knives and dangerous sporting equipment were recognized as too dangerous to allow inside aircraft cabins and were placed on the prohibited items list. While Congress granted the TSA Administrator authority to modify the list in 2004, TSA's recent policy change was made without formal stakeholder engagement.

TSA should engage all stakeholders, including the attendants, pilots, and other crew and workers on the frontline, when making significant policy changes that directly impact their safety and interests. The Coalition of Flight Attendants, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, and the Coalition of Airline Pilots Associations all oppose TSA's decision and believe that future policy changes should be heard by the Aviation Security Advisory Committee before being implemented. I support efforts to improve the efficiency of the airline security screening process but concerns of all relevant groups should be heard, especially when their safety is in question.

I urge you to formally engage with all stakeholders on the decision to allow knives inside aircraft cabins and to include them in the process when considering future policy changes.

Sincerely,

Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Member of Congress

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