

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 31, 2007

Honorable Edmund S. "Kip" Hawley
Administrator
Transportation Security Administration
Department of Homeland Security
601 South 12th Street, East Building
Arlington, Virginia 22202-4220

Dear Administrator Hawley:

As members of the Colorado congressional delegation, we have personally witnessed the protracted passenger wait times at Denver International Airport (DIA). In recent weeks, the peak period wait times have been the worst in the country, by TSA's own accounting, with averages over 25 minutes and passengers facing routine waits of 35-55 minutes.

As you may know, DIA's origin and destination (O&D) passenger traffic was up 7% in the first six months of 2007, and traffic levels are expected to continue to rise. DIA is now the fourth busiest airport and one of the fastest growing large hub airports in the United States. Yet, we have been informed that the TSA's Screening Allocation Model (SAM) provides for only one additional Fulltime Equivalent (FTE) screener for Fiscal Year 2008.

From our perspective, which is shared by DIA, the airlines serving Denver, and our constituents, this situation is unacceptable. Passengers risk missing flights, and airlines suffer increased costs when holding flights to permit the boarding of passengers who checked in on time but were delayed going through security screening. Denver airport officials are justifiably concerned that the passenger screening delays will cause vacation travelers to choose another destination where they do not have to experience these delays. This is particularly important to our state as we approach Colorado's busy holiday and ski season.

We understand that DIA airport officials have been working to assist TSA in reducing identified inefficiencies in the screening process, and that Denver is now spending over one million dollars annually in personnel and technology to support the TSA screening process. However, with TSA's recent assumption of document checking responsibilities, delays were predictable as TSA screeners gained experience with this new task. Moreover, it appears that TSA has made no accommodation for the expansion of TSA responsibilities at airport security checkpoints, thereby guaranteeing longer processing times. On our recent travels to and from Colorado, we continue to see security lanes unstaffed during peak periods. We have been advised that TSA has suggested that DIA add additional lanes, which DIA is willing to do, provided that TSA commits to staff the new lanes adequately. We share DIA's concern over whether the TSA will fully staff the new lanes if they are added.

We appreciate that TSA bolstered staffing for the long weekend when the World Series was held in Denver, and understand that TSA now has under consideration a request for 58 additional

screeners. We urge TSA promptly to approve this request, and to take whatever additional steps as necessary to reduce passenger wait times to 10 minutes as originally promised when TSA took over passenger screening.

•Please let us know as soon as possible what steps the TSA has taken and will take immediately to improve the situation at Denver International Airport.

Sincerely,



Wayne Allard
U.S. Senate



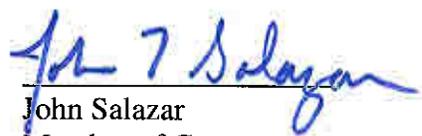
Ken Salazar
U.S. Senate



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



Mark Udall
Member of Congress



John Salazar
Member of Congress



Marilyn Musgrave
Member of Congress



Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress



Tom Tancredo
Member of Congress



Ed Perlmutter
Member of Congress