



PRESS RELEASE  
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## Congressman Donovan of House DHS Committee Supports Airport Law Enforcement

The American Alliance of Airport Police Officers (AAPO) thanks House Homeland Security Committee member Congressman Dan Donovan (R-N.Y.) for authoring and getting approved an amendment to the Department of Homeland Security Authorization Act of 2017 (H.R. 2825) in support of the law enforcement reimbursement program at DHS.

TSA's law enforcement reimbursement program was established to assist airports with payments toward having dedicated law enforcement officers working in and around passenger screening checkpoints. However, the funding structure for this program and its disbursements have been opaque — it is unclear how funds are distributed, which airports receive funding and in what amounts.

While this program has been targeted for cuts, given the ongoing threats faced by our airports, it is critical that it be highlighted for its commitment to supporting a law enforcement presence at our airports and specifically near checkpoints, since this is the last barrier to stop threats from penetrating into the sterile area of an airport where aircraft are accessible. Congressman Donovan's amendment will require TSA to issue a report on the current structure of the law enforcement reimbursement program and how funding decisions are made. This information will allow policymakers to better understand the program's funding methodology in order to make informed decisions on funding allocations and how TSA engages with local law enforcement (if at all) within this program.

"Congressman Donovan gets it — police officers are needed at our airports now more than ever," says Paul Nunziato, president of the Port Authority Police Benevolent Association and co-founder of AAPO. "We all see what is happening in Europe and the numerous incidents and attacks that have taken place at airports overseas, and we need to be smarter with federal investments at airports and use the valuable funds for things that actually make a difference and make airports safer. TSA's law enforcement reimbursement program is supposed to help pay for police to be near TSA screening at airports. It is important to understand exactly how TSA is using this program and see if it can be better targeted and utilized, especially in this heightened threat environment."

"The TSA law enforcement reimbursement program should support on-the-ground law enforcement efforts, as its title implies," says Marshall McClain, president of the Los Angeles Airport Peace Officers Association and co-founder of AAPO. "None of my officers are aware of where these funds are being used. AAPO has long called for having a constant police presence near screening — to protect and stand up for TSA and the traveling public. Leaders like Congressman Donovan understand the importance of this mission, and we appreciate him taking a stand in supporting what airport police do."

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*The American Alliance of Airport Police Officers (AAPO) is composed of rank-and-file airport police officers (including many dual police/aircraft rescue firefighters) who stand as the first line of defense against terrorist attacks, hijackings and other criminal activity at our nation's airports. We seek to promote security and safety for the traveling public, visitors and airport employees by highlighting best practices and identifying areas for improvement and proposed solutions for our nation's airport security deployment. AAPO focuses on regulatory issues that promote our efforts to provide the most advanced and cutting-edge service innovations and security processes in our nation and the world. Our organization represents thousands of sworn law enforcement officers across the United States beholden only to this mission. We are unencumbered by neither political nor managerial constraints that would prevent us from promoting sound public safety policy.*

*The founding members of the American Alliance of Airport Police Officers comprise numerous rank-and-file airport police officers from John F. Kennedy International Airport; LaGuardia Airport; Los Angeles International Airport; Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport; LA/Ontario International Airport; Newark Liberty International Airport; Van Nuys Airport; Stewart International Airport; and Teterboro Airport.*