



PRESS RELEASE
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Airport Security Protocols Must Be Bolstered

With air travel expected to reach a record 45.2 million passengers between December 16 and January 5, after what is anticipated to be the busiest year ever for air travel in the United States, the American Alliance of Airport Police Officers (AAPO) urges travelers to demand enhanced security protocols at American airports, particularly in light of the current heightened threats in the geopolitical climate.

Airports are continually busy hubs for both passenger travel and for the movement of goods. The targeting of public places around the globe by terrorists and those seeking to cause harm requires us to continually reevaluate security at airports since they are one of the most high-profile and sought-after targets for attacks. The traveling public should demand that airports bolster security.

As AAPO has repeatedly noted, the single-most comprehensive and practical way to increase security at our nation's airports is to have an armed law enforcement officer stationed within 300 feet of the TSA screening area to fortify the TSA checkpoint — the most vulnerable and busiest chokepoint in airports — and detect and stop threats from reaching airplanes.

AAPO remains hopeful that the newly nominated secretary for the Department of Homeland Security, retired General John Kelly, will focus his attention on effective and commonsense airport security issues and work to ensure that American airports are the safest in the world.

Additional security measures that can be taken to strengthen safety include ensuring airport police have real-time access to all closed-circuit security camera systems (currently, most major airports have a fractured camera system in which vendors, tenants, TSA and others can deny access to airport law enforcement) and screening all airport employees, including the TSA's, which will help prevent an insider threat or criminal activity by employees.

“With all that is going on in the world right now, and knowing that airports continue to be a top objective for terrorists, we must close the security gaps that exist at our nation's major airports,” says Marshall McClain, co-founder of AAPO and president of the Los Angeles Airport Peace Officers Association. “Given the volume of passengers and cargo that come through airports, they are similar to small cities and require thorough and thoughtful security protocols. The recommendations from AAPO help close security loopholes and fortify our airports. In the interest of public safety, these proposals cannot and should not be ignored any longer, especially during this busier-than-ever holiday travel season.”

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 are composed of 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.