



## HOMELAND SECURITY COMMITTEE

### Statement of Subcommittee Chairman John Katko (R-NY) Transportation and Protective Security Subcommittee

*Joint CIP & TPS Subcommittee Hearing*

*“Understanding the Cybersecurity of America’s Aviation Sector”*

September 6, 2018

Remarks as Prepared

Thank you, Chairman Ratcliffe. I am pleased our Subcommittees could work together to hold this timely and important hearing. In the wake of the devastating attacks on September 11, 2001, Congress created the Transportation Security Administration to protect and secure our nation’s transportation systems. Seventeen years later, our aviation sector remains an attractive target for malicious actors who seek to inflict harm on the United States. However, threats have proliferated to include the realm of cybersecurity—something that was much less of a concern during the creation of TSA. The travel and tourism industries contribute trillions of dollars to the U.S. and global economy, and passenger volumes have steadily increased year after year. The fact that our aviation system is vital to the vibrancy and interconnectedness of our nation is precisely what makes it such a highly-valued target.

Protecting America’s transportation systems is a collaborative effort between numerous government and private sector entities who share the goal of protecting the free movement of people and commerce. Therefore, as innovations in technology change the way our aviation sector operates, our collective security posture needs to adapt accordingly. This hearing today will focus on cybersecurity in the aviation domain, and I look forward to discussing how TSA—and the Department of Homeland Security in general—interact with various stakeholders as partners to bolster the cybersecurity of the aviation ecosystem.

On any given day, TSA and its partners in the aviation community secure around 2.4 million travelers, 1.2 million checked bags, and 8.4 million pounds of cargo. These security operations incorporate a wide array of technologies and involve a considerable number of stakeholders, including airports, airline groups, and air carriers, among many others. As the aviation community increasingly relies on connected systems for critical operations, we must acknowledge the urgency and importance of protecting the aviation sector’s information technology systems and data against cyber threats. The impact of cyber-attacks can be far-reaching. In addition to significant security consequences, cyber-attacks on the aviation sector can prompt considerable economic losses, passenger frustration, and undermine the public’s trust in the aviation system.

As Chairman of the Subcommittee on Transportation and Protective Security, I have been a vocal advocate for forward-leaning security policies and best-practices to safeguard our nation’s

transportation systems, and I believe we need to start thinking about cybersecurity as a critical element of that overall security posture. That is why I'm pleased to hold this joint hearing with my colleagues from the Subcommittee on Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Protection. Our discussions surrounding aviation security should not ignore the vulnerabilities and risks posed by broad and interconnected systems with multiple vectors of attack. As our systems in the air and on the ground become more advanced and more interconnected, cybersecurity will continue to be inextricably linked with aviation security.

TSA was created in the aftermath of 9/11 and charged with the mission of preventing another large-scale act of terrorism on the American transportation system. While physical threats like improvised explosive devices continue to pose a major security concern, the reality is that U.S. networks and databases are under daily cyber-threat by Nation-states, international crime organizations, and individual hackers. This hearing illustrates my commitment to bringing a necessary focus to cybersecurity in the aviation sector, and I look forward to learning about the federal government's role in this space from our esteemed witnesses. I hope to understand how the partnerships between the Department of Homeland Security, TSA, and aviation stakeholders can be leveraged to make cyber risk awareness a key part of aviation security.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

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