NEWS ALERT

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Homeland Security Committee

Rep. Bennie G. Thompson, Chairman

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement of Chairman Bennie G. Thompson

"Managing Risk and Increasing Efficiency: An Examination of the Implementation of the Registered Traveler (RT) Program"

July 31, 2007 (Washington) – Today, Committee on Homeland Security Chairman Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) delivered the following prepared remarks for the Transportation Security and Infrastructure Protection Subcommittee hearing entitled "Managing Risk and Increasing Efficiency: An Examination of the Implementation of the Registered Traveler (RT) Program":

"The Registered Traveler (RT) Program, designed for the frequent business traveler, requires participants to submit biographical and biometric information in order to streamline the security screening process at our nation's airports.

This concept, if implemented correctly, has the potential to dramatically improve security for all airline travelers, by allowing frequent travelers to get through the system more quickly, reducing the volume of passengers that go through traditional TSA screening, allowing them to focus more on the regular traveling public.

The process for becoming a RT is rigorous, and through regular vetting against the various checklists used by TSA, we can be assured that passengers who go through this process are not a threat to national security.

This program operates at no cost to the government, and it's a great example of how the private sector can come together with the government to make progress on security that benefits all Americans.

But in order for this program to be fully implemented, the technology has to be perfected and we must have absolute faith in the background checks performed by TSA."

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