



One Hundred Twelfth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20515

March 26, 2012

The Honorable Gene L. Dodaro
Comptroller General
U.S. Accountability Office
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

We are writing to request an audit on the utilization of Advanced Imaging Technology by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). The Government Accountability Office (GAO), at our request, most recently identified a number of issues with the utilization of Advanced Imaging Technology (AIT). Furthermore, GAO identified a plan for TSA actions to improve current AIT utilization across our airports. We remain interested in learning more about TSA efforts to address GAO's plan for improved utilization of AIT.

Following the attempted terrorist attack on December 25, 2009, and the security breaches at Newark and JFK airports in 2010, it became clear to the public and Congress that vulnerabilities at airports continue to exist and that improved security policies, procedures, and technology are required.

Following a preliminary review of the attempted attack on Christmas Day, the President directed the Department to pursue "enhanced screening technologies, protocols and procedures, especially in regard to aviation and other transportation sectors." Democratic members of the Committee repeatedly requested, in public and private settings, that DHS ensure that the President's mandate be carried out in a successful and efficient manner.

According to a TSA deployment plan, throughout January 2009 and December 2010, TSA deployed more than 400 AIT machines to airports across the nation. The majority of AIT purchases were procured with the use of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds. Today, there are more than 640 AIT machines deployed across approximately 165 airports.¹ TSA has indicated that each machine costs around \$170,000.²

¹ Transportation Security Administration. March 22, 2012. <http://www.tsa.gov/approach/tech/ait/index.shtm>.

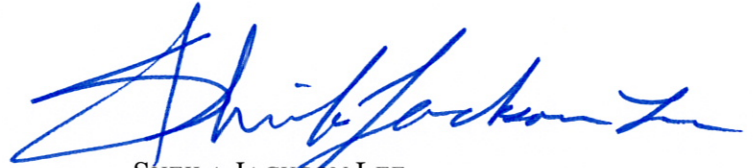
A conservative estimate would indicate that to date, the Federal Government has invested more than \$1 billion dollars in this technology, excluding software upgrades and staffing allocations. Therefore, we are keenly interested in the utilization concerns raised by your most recent report and would like to request a follow up audit on TSA's efforts to address utilization challenges identified in your previous work.

If you have any questions, please contact Cherri Branson, Chief Counsel for Oversight, at 202-226-2616.

Sincerely,



BENNIE G. THOMPSON
Ranking Member
House Committee on Homeland Security



SHEILA JACKSON LEE
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation
Security
House Committee on Homeland
Security

² Lord, Stephen. Testimony by the Government Accountability Office, GAO-10-484T, March 17, 2010.
<http://www.gao.gov/assets/130/124207.pdf>. March 22, 2012.