

Statement of Rep. Danny Davis (D-IL) on behalf of Ranking Member Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX)

**Subcommittee on Transportation Security
Committee on Homeland Security**

Hearing “TSA Recent Scanner Trouble: Real Strategy or Wasteful Smokescreen”

November 15, 2012

This Subcommittee has closely followed Advanced Imaging Technology for several Congresses—under Democratic leadership and Republican leadership.

On this side of the aisle, my colleagues have questioned both the effectiveness of the technology and the cost of the machines.

However, few issues have caused us as much concern as whether these machines undermine the fundamental right of privacy.

My colleagues have regularly asked whether a passenger must surrender her basic right of bodily security to assure the nation’s security.

It is gratifying to see that the Chairman shares both our concerns and our commitment to privacy.

On March 17, 2009, under the leadership of Congresswoman Jackson Lee, this Subcommittee held a hearing evaluating the detection and screening technologies being used by the Department of Homeland Security.

That hearing offered members a chance to understand the enhanced screening technologies, protocols and procedures.

In the aftermath of the Christmas Day bomber—also known as the Underwear bomber—we expressed our support for the deployment of these advanced imaging technologies and were assured that these new machines would effectively diminish the threats that continue to put aviation security at risk.

Since 2009, DHS and TSA have taken steps to implement A-I-T devices in most of the major airports in the United States.

However, we know that no technology is perfect.

Based on a conservative estimate, it appears that the Department has invested at least 80 million dollars on this technology so far.

Given the challenges that TSA has faced in assuring privacy protections in these machines, and the forward movement of technology, we must consider where we go from here.