

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

## Ensure that TSA Screeners Get the Same Rights As Other Federal Employees

### Cosponsor the “Rights for Transportation Security Officers Act of 2016”

February 8, 2016

Dear Colleague:

Today, we introduced H.R.4488, the *Rights for Transportation Security Officers Act of 2016*, which will provide the Transportation Security Administration’s (TSA) screening workforce with long-overdue rights, the same rights afforded to most Federal workers under Title 5.

Currently, the 45,000 Transportation Security Officers (TSOs) who serve on the frontlines of aviation security at our Nation’s airports have been denied basic protections of the Federal civil service system such as collective bargaining, health, leave and other basic rights. For the great majority of you, the contributions of our TSOs to our Nation’s aviation security are apparent on your weekly flights home to your districts.

When TSA was established, Congress gave it broad authority to design its own personnel system. Unfortunately, TSA has implemented a system that denies TSOs predictability and consistency. With respect to collective bargaining, we were hopeful that the Obama Administration would use its administrative authority to ensure that workers could be effectively represented by a labor union. While there seemed to be some initial progress in 2011, over the years, it has become increasingly evident that the approach taken by TSA is inadequate, insofar as the union representing the TSO workforce has limited authority to bargain collectively on their behalf. As such, matters of significance to the workforce—from pay grievances and arbitration systems—are unsettled, and TSOs lack access to appeal adverse personnel actions to an objective, third party like other Federal workers, including managers at TSA, can do.

In the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress, many of you cosponsored H.R. 1881 which, like this measure, would place TSOs under Title 5. We believe that enacting H.R. 4488 will help improve the morale and stability of the screening workforce and urge you to join us in the fight to extend the protection of the Federal Civil Service system to our TSOs. For more information, or to cosponsor H.R.4488, please contact Cedric Haynes with the Committee on Homeland Security Minority staff at [Cedric.Haynes@mail.house.gov](mailto:Cedric.Haynes@mail.house.gov), or 6-2616.

Sincerely,



Bennie G. Thompson  
Member of Congress



Nita M. Lowey  
Member of Congress