



Eric Bunn Sr.
National Secretary-Treasurer

Dr. Everett B. Kelley
National President

Jeremy A. Lannan
NVP for Women & Fair Practices

September 17, 2021

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO (AFGE), which represents more than 700,000 federal and District of Columbia employees in 70 agencies, including the 45,000 Transportation Security Officers (TSOs) at the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) who protect the flying public, I ask you to cosponsor S. 2717, the “Funding for Aviation Screeners and Threat Elimination Restoration (FASTER) Act” reintroduced by Senators Edward Markey (D-MA) and Richard Blumenthal (D-CT).

The FASTER Act would restore revenues from aviation security fees established following September 11, 2001 to help finance the cost of aviation security. Since 2013, one-third of the security fee revenues have been diverted to the General Fund to pay for unrelated government spending. By FY 2027, more than \$19 billion will have been diverted away from aviation security unless Congress acts.

Transportation Security Officers are among the lowest paid federal workers, earning an average of about \$35,000 per year. By the nature of their jobs, most reside near big cities with large airports where the cost of living is high. One of the provisions of the bill would allow TSOs to be paid in the event of a lapse in appropriations. While the last government shutdown was more than two years ago, some officers are still working to recover financially from going 35 days without pay and we hope they do not face another shutdown soon.

S. 2717 has a companion bill in the House, H.R. 1813 where it enjoys strong bipartisan support, including House Homeland Security Ranking Member John Katko (R-NY). This legislation helps to ensure that taxpayers’ aviation security fees are spent as they are intended – for aviation security. To become a cosponsor, please contact Eric Kashdan, eric_kashdan@markey.senate.gov.

AFGE appreciates your support of our nation’s TSOs and we look forward to working with to pass this legislation. If you have any questions about AFGE’s position on S. 2717, please contact Julie Tippens, Julie.Tippens@afge.org.

Sincerely,

Everett B. Kelley
National President

