

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 9, 2026

The Honorable David P. Cummins
Administrator
Transportation Security Administration
6595 Springfield Center Drive
Springfield, VA 22150

Dear Administrator Cummins:

We urge you to immediately reverse the recent Transportation Security Administration (TSA) policy that prohibits Travel Document Checkers (TDCs) from sitting while they work. The policy places unnecessary burdens on the workforce and is unlikely to improve either aviation security or the passenger experience.

TSA has publicly confirmed that TDCs will no longer be allowed to sit while performing their duties. Following this change, chairs were removed from checkpoints at many airports. Specifically, a TSA spokesperson stated the new policy “reinforces both our security posture and our commitment to hospitality.”¹ Labor organizations representing affected employees have stated they were not consulted and raised concerns about the impacts on employee safety.²

We share TSA’s commitment to strong security and a positive traveler experience, but this policy advances neither objective. In fact, it is likely to hurt airport security by damaging the health and retention of qualified and experienced officers. TSA employees spend much of their workday walking on hard surfaces, and chairs provide basic ergonomic support to many of them. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration have both identified prolonged standing as a health risk.³ In fact, NIOSH found that prolonged standing increases physical fatigue, which is likely to result in screeners being less alert and being less effective at fulfilling TSA’s security mission. This policy needlessly makes an already demanding work environment even more challenging, may force employees to make difficult decisions about whether they can remain on the job at all, and is likely to hurt screeners’ ability to keep flyers safe.

¹ Ayesha Ali, "TSA Says Officers Must Stand, Chairs Banned at Airport Checkpoints Nationwide," ABC News, September 29, 2026, <https://abcnews.com/US/tsa-officers-stand-chairs-banned-airport-checkpoints-nationwide/story?id=136873440>.

² Alexandra Skores, "TSA Officers Now Not Allowed to Sit Down While Checking Boarding Passes and IDs," CNN, September 29, 2026, <https://www.cnn.com/2026/09/29/us/tsa-officers-chairs>.

³ Robert B. Dick, "Prolonged Standing at Work," NIOSH Science Bulletin, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, December 9, 2014, <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/bulletin/2014/standing.html>; Occupational Safety and Health Administration, "Section VII: Chapter 1, Back Disorders and Injuries," *OSHA Technical Manual*, U.S. Department of Labor, accessed September 30, 2026, <https://www.osha.gov/otm/section-7-ergonomics/chapter-1>.

The passenger experience justification is similarly unpersuasive. TSA's interaction with flyers is an important but limited component of the passenger experience, which often depends far more on airline and airport staff. Travelers' experience when dealing with TSA at the checkpoint depends overwhelmingly on the speed and efficiency of screening, which does not depend on whether the employee reviewing their identification is sitting or standing. If TSA's goal is a better flyer experience, there are much better focuses than requiring employees to stand.

TSA employees perform an essential national security mission under demanding conditions. They deserve workplace policies grounded in evidence, sound safety practices, and respect for the people responsible for carrying out that mission. Accordingly, we urge you to swiftly reverse this policy change.

Sincerely,



Michael R. Turner
Member of Congress



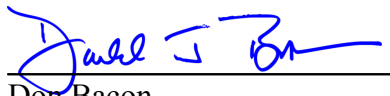
Rob Bresnahan, Jr.
Member of Congress



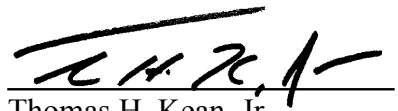
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