

privatized. We do not want our CIA or our FBI to be privatized. We do not want our firefighters to be privatized. We are talking about security here. Our airport security personnel should be professional. They should be accountable. They should be highly trained, and they should be government employees. The government should be responsible for their performance.

I think this is what the American people want. The Senate voted 100 to nothing. Every Republican and every Democrat in the Senate of this country voted to federalize this security force. Yet we are not getting an opportunity in this House Chamber even to bring the bill to the floor for a debate and vote. I do not believe that we will get that opportunity until the American people express themselves, until the American people let the leadership in this Chamber know how deeply and how strongly they feel about this issue.

Mr. INSLEE. I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to follow up on the languishing of these large machines that are in a number of airports around the country. What a terrible tragedy. I happen to know firsthand of these particular machines.

One of the reasons given by some of the individuals I spoke to is we do not have a physical area large enough for the machine. That is a definitive and defined need for the Federal Government to step in and to indicate you do not have one, you make one because it all plays into securing the American skies, if you will.

I think the next point that I want to make is what have we been covering and hearing about over the last couple of days? Anthrax.

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We have not been hearing about how do we prevent tragedies with anthrax, or measures that would have prevented what is occurring now. We are hearing of the number of incidences where people are bringing to the attention of the law enforcement authorities about this kind of powder and that kind of powder.

Part of it, of course, is misinformation. Part of it is not understanding what anthrax is, what it is and what it is not. Part of it is not having the information that the American people need to have, and this is what we are facing right now with federalizing the security. The American people are not hearing what the truth is about what is happening in the United States Congress.

And though I do not expect for our media, both electronic and print, to be our advertisers, if this is not a time for civic duty, to be able to make headlines across the Nation, when are we going to vote on a bill passed by the

Senate 100-0? When are we going to accept the responsibility, or the Federal Government or the Congress, to do what they are supposed to do and to help move this forward?

That is the point I think should be made tonight. I hope someone is listening. Because tomorrow we should wake up and we should see these kinds of headlines, because maybe if we had seen headlines explaining anthrax 4 weeks ago or being able to explain that you do not take an envelope and go to a hospital, what you do is you leave it contained, you call 911 or you call the authorities, you do not move this around, maybe some of the tragedies that have occurred, we might have avoided.

We want to, of course, secure all these things that are happening, but now we have a time or a chance to get in front of this issue of security for our airlines. How can we get in front of it? How can we be preventative? How can we be futuristic? We can pass this legislation, have it in place and secure the American people and secure the airways for the American people. I hope we have glaring headlines demanding a vote in the United States House of Representatives.

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. INSLEE. We should assure the American people, too, that we can give 100 percent screening to make sure bombs are not in the belly of our airplanes and not increase the time it takes to get on an airplane.

The reason I know that is when you think about this, we screen carry-on baggage already. When you go through your little arched magnometer, you put your briefcase or your purse or whatever on the machine, it goes through; and it is x-rayed. That screens, it depends on what airport you are in, maybe 400, 600 passengers an hour. We x-ray hand-carried baggage already. What we need to do is to have screening for the baggage at the same rate, the same number of passengers per hour; and if we build that capacity, we are not going to slow down people getting on planes for 5 minutes.

Americans have an expectation of security and convenience. In this case, we can have those both as long as we can compel the Federal Government to take over decision-making about these systems to assure 100 percent screening. It takes this House to act; because, unfortunately, the airline industry for one reason or another has been incapable of that.

I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. STRICKLAND. I would like to comment on my friend from Texas and her comment regarding the media and the need for public exposure. I believe it is beginning to happen. I go back to what I have said before here. I think one of the reasons we have not heard more about this is there has been an assumption, a belief, a false belief, that

bags are currently being screened. I just point to this editorial in the Columbus, Ohio Dispatch of today, calling attention to this matter.

Last evening in Columbus, Channel 10 television had a program where they discussed this need for increased security and bags being checked. So I believe people are starting to understand that what they have assumed for a long time is not necessarily what is happening. And when you consider the fact that probably no more than 5 percent of the luggage that is placed in the belly of a plane is checked, that is alarming.

I have shared with my colleagues in the past the fact that I am not even certain that the current screening that is taking place is at all meaningful, because at Dulles International Airport last week, I checked in and put my bag down, and I was informed that my luggage had been randomly selected for further screening for explosives. And then I was asked to voluntarily take my bag down the corridor, go down another hallway, turn down another corridor, and there I would find the machine. I said to the person who gave me those instructions, what makes you think that I would voluntarily if I had an explosive in that luggage, voluntarily, without being escorted, with no one observing me, walk down the corridor and around and in back of this wall here to voluntarily have my bag screened if, in fact, it had explosives in it? Why would I not just decide to leave the airport and maybe come back in the afternoon when my bag may not be chosen at random for further screening for explosives?

So what we are doing now, at least certainly at Dulles International Airport, is meaningless in my judgment. We need a law, we need procedures, we need standards, we need training, we need decent pay for these people, and they need to be Federal employees. In that way, the traveling public can have a high level of security and a sense that we have done all that we can do to make sure that they are safe when they fly.

Mr. INSLEE. I want to thank my colleagues for this safety hour. We hope that the U.S. House listens to the American people and give them what they want, which is 100 percent screening. It will be a good day for the House if we do that.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1305

Mr. SHOWS (during the special order of Mr. INSLEE). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1305.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SCHROCK). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Mississippi?

There was no objection.