

**Opening Statement**  
**Congressman Adrian Smith (R-NE)**  
**Subcommittee on Technology & Innovation**  
**April 24, 2008**

Thank you Chairman Wu. It's a pleasure to be here this afternoon for this Subcommittee hearing on the Department of Homeland Security's Transportation Security Laboratory and aviation security. Subcommittee Ranking Member Gingrey has been detained at a meeting of the House Armed Services Committee and will be joining this hearing when possible. He has an insightful opening statement that he will submit for the record and which I urge everyone to read.

There is an obvious and immediate need for improvements in aviation security within the U.S. and around the world. Airlines continue to be targeted for attack, and new types of threats are being exposed everyday. We need the help and support of scientists and engineers to defend against the wide variety of explosives and weapons that could be used in an attack.

Members of Congress take a lot of flights back and forth between Washington and our homes. And while we may feel like aviation security experts ourselves after the hundredth flight, the real expertise is before us today. The panel has a wealth of experience and knowledge in this area, and I'm looking forward to learning what I can from you.

Before closing, I would also like to echo a statement in Dr. Gingrey's prepared remarks. A large number of companies and individual researchers have looked at how they might improve aviation security after the tragic events of 9-11. However, within this wider aviation security industry, the roles and responsibilities of TSA, TSL, and other institutions like universities, national labs, or private companies are poorly understood. In your testimony today, I hope the witnesses can provide clear and concise guidance for how our aviation security strategy is set and how that strategy impacts technology development.

Again, thank you for taking the time to speak with us today. Mr. Chairman, I will yield back the balance of my time.