



Air Cargo Coalition, SAFE, Issues Statement on Passage of HR 1, Screening, flexibility preserved in bill as per industry recommendations

WASHINGTON, D.C. (July 27, 2007): SAFE, (Strategic Alliance on Freight Forwarder Endeavors) an advocacy coalition comprised of the Airforwarders Association and the National Customs Brokers and Forwarders Association of America, Inc., commended Congress on their final passage of HR 1, The Implementing the 9.11 Commission Recommendation Act of 2007. The legislation specifically addresses air cargo security, in Title XVI, Section 1602 and calls for 100 percent screening of cargo on passenger planes within three years of enactment.

“The final bill reflects many of the recommendations and policy proposals advocated over the last year by SAFE and others in the air cargo industry,” said Brandon Fried, executive director of the Airforwarders Association. “We have always supported a multi-layered approach to cargo security. The concept of ‘screening’ instead of inspection, as well as the flexibility given to TSA to include other methods of screening and the use of the certified shipper program, are all reflective of that security approach.”

The provision specifically calls for 100 percent screening of air cargo on passenger planes within 3 years, with 50 percent to be screened in the first 18 months and reaching 100 percent by 2010. The use of the term ‘screening’ has long been a critical distinction for the industry, as inspection would require costly and inefficient reliance only on technology or opening the box.

Screening is defined as, “physical examination or non-intrusive methods of assessing whether cargo poses a threat to transportation security. Methods include x-ray systems, explosives detection systems, explosives trace detection, explosives detection canine teams or a physical search with manifest verification.” The bill continues in creating the authority for TSA to approve additional methods for screening, including a ‘certified shipper’ program. However, there is still reason for some unease.

“We remain concerned about the reality involved in the implementation of such an expansive new program in the amount of time allotted, as well as the lack of appropriated funds by Congress for this effort,” said Mary Jo Muoio, president of the NCBFAA. “That said, the final language reflects the successful efforts of our coalition, and others, in expanding the trace, EDS and canine efforts already underway and utilizing the full range of screening methodology to improve air cargo security.”

Specifically, AfA and NCBFAA were signatories and key members of the coalition that shaped the air cargo policy recommendations delivered to Congress in



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September of 2006. Key proposals included an expansion of the explosive detection canine teams, expanding security “up the supply chain” as with a certified shipper program and utilizing technologies that have been certified by TSA such as EDS or trace.

“The air cargo industry has always held safety as its highest priority,” said Fried and Muoio, co-founders of the SAFE coalition. “Real security and safety for Americans is created when we protect our physical and economic security. This bill, with its use of ‘screening’ and the multitude of tools, rather than a narrow “scan or ban” approach advocated by some members of Congress, represents an effective path forward for cargo security.”

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About the Airforwarders Association

The Airforwarders Association, with a full membership of more than 250 members, was founded in 1990, and today provides lobbying, training, information, and other beneficial services to the air forwarding community. The association works closely with the U.S. Congress, U.S. federal regulatory agencies and administration departments, air carriers, service providers, and other industry-related entities throughout America and abroad. For more information visit www.airforwarders.org

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