

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4705

February 12, 2018

Honorable David Pecoske
Administrator
Transportation Security Administration
245 Murray Lane SW
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Administrator Pecoske:

I am writing to thank you for your commitment to ten canine teams in service at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport by March of this year. I would appreciate an update from your staff on the specific plan and timeline for this to occur.

Sea-Tac Airport remains one of the fastest growing airports in the country, having grown from just over 30 million passengers in 2010 to nearly 47 million last year. While the airport is investing billions in infrastructure and technology upgrades to catch up to the needed capacity for their facility, they rely heavily on TSA to help meet their security and customer service objectives related to passenger wait times at security screening checkpoints.

Maintaining a sufficient number of TSA passenger screening canines at Sea-Tac is an essential part of meeting the airport's needs. These dogs can almost double screening lane throughput, and are a highly effective resource to increase checkpoint efficiency. Sea-Tac estimates that the difference in passenger throughput is 140 passengers per hour for a screening lane without a canine, and 245 passengers per hour with a canine. Currently, the airport only has five TSA passenger screening canines.

March marks the beginning of the busy spring travel season, and has historically been one of the most difficult times of year to maintaining efficient passenger screening wait times. In spring 2016, for example, wait times regularly exceeded an hour at Sea-Tac. Having a full complement of passenger screening canines as prescribed by the TSA staffing model is the best way to ensure passenger screening wait times are as short as possible over the next few months at Sea-Tac.

I appreciate your partnership in ensuring that Sea-Tac remains able to accommodate its growing demand. I also appreciate the willingness which you have expressed to travel to the Northwest to witness these challenges firsthand, and I look forward to discussing these issues further when you are able to join me on a visit to Sea-Tac. In the meantime, I look forward to receiving additional information on the March timeline.

Thank you again for your leadership on behalf of our nation's airports.

Sincerely,



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

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