

June 22, 2005

Subcommittee on Economic Security, Infrastructure Protection, and Cybersecurity  
Committee on Homeland Security  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington D.C. 20515

**Re: June 9 Testimony: The Promise of  
Registered Traveler**

To Whom it May Concern:

I appreciated the opportunity to share my views with the Committee at the June 9 hearing entitled "The Promise of Registered Traveler."

Since that time, allegations have surfaced that the Transportation Security Administration has collected and maintained extensive personal information about airline passengers for testing of the Secure Flight program even though Congress forbade it and the TSA said it would not do so.

While the exact allegations are unclear and have not been proven, I believe the consequences may be quite serious. The American public and Congress rely on agencies' Privacy Act notices and related publications as describing accurately what they will do with Americans' personal information.

In preparing for the June 9 hearing, I reviewed and relied on the TSA's June 1, 2004 Privacy Act System of Records Notice, 69 Fed. Reg. 30948, regarding the Registered Traveler program and the Registered Traveler Pilot Privacy Impact Assessment dated June 24, 2004. My testimony assumed that such documents bind the TSA.

Had I known of allegations that the TSA ignores the Privacy Act's requirements and its own promises about American travelers' privacy in the Secure Flight program, I certainly would have included this information in my testimony. Unaware of the allegations, I may have misinformed the Subcommittee, understating the risks to privacy from programs like Registered Traveler and Secure Flight.

Sincerely,

Jim Harper  
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The Cato Institute