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## **LEGISLATIVE ALERT!**

(202) 637-5057

February 3, 2011

Dear Senator:

We urge you to oppose the Wicker Amendment to the FAA Reauthorization bill that would deny basic collective bargaining rights to Transportation Security Officers (TSOs). The Wicker Amendment would single out TSOs from among the hundred of thousands of Homeland Security Employees who currently have full collective bargaining rights, including the Border Patrol, Federal Protective Service, the Coast Guard and U.S. Marshals Service.

Transportation Security Officers currently are allowed to join unions, but are prohibited from engaging in collective bargaining, based on a 2003 directive from the Under Secretary. The Bush Administration's decision to deny TSA screeners their basic rights had nothing to do with national security, and everything to do with its hostility to the institution of collective bargaining. Suggesting that the collective bargaining process undermines national security ignores decades of research demonstrating that collective bargaining contributes to high quality workplaces, low turnover and high productivity. TSA's own experience illustrates this exact point: it is hemorrhaging employees and has among the highest injury, illness and lost time rates in the federal government, and its attrition rate is ten times higher than other federal occupations. Denying TSA screeners collective bargaining rights has made the traveling public less safe, not more safe.

Passage of the Wicker Amendment will undermine the goal to insure that the public is protected by a highly-trained, highly-motivated workforce, and we urge you to oppose it.

Sincerely,

William Samuel, Director  
Government Affairs Department