April 29, 2024

The Honorable Charles Schumer, Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson, Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries, Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker Johnson, and Minority
Leader Jeffries:

As Congress begins deliberations on the reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration
(FAA), we urge you to close a policy loophole that threatens public safety by allowing unvetted
individuals with unverifiable identification to board aircraft traveling to or within the United
States. This is a clear public safety and national security risk that is unacceptable.

The stated mission of the FAA is "to provide the safest, most efficient aerospace system in the
world." The United States learned the hard way on September 11, 2001, that we must put
primary emphasis on "safest" when it comes to air travel. As a direct result of 9/11, Congress
passed the REAL ID Act, which requires states to fortify the security features of driver's licenses
and verify the citizenship or lawful immigration status of recipients of such licenses.

Today, no U.S. citizen or lawful immigrant or nonimmigrant may board an aircraft traveling to or
within the United States without presenting a photo ID or completing an onerous identity
verification process. At the same time, hundreds of thousands of illegal aliens and unvetted
parolees are being permitted to board aircraft traveling to or within the United States based
purely on the biographic information they choose to provide on the CBP-One app or to the
Border Patrol agents processing them. There is no process for verifying that the name they
provide is their actual name, or that they do not have a criminal record in their home country.

By allowing illegal aliens and parolees to board aircraft based only on the information they entered into the CBP-One app or that an overworked Border Patrol agent filled in on a Notice to Appear (NTA) or a Notice to Report (NTR), air carriers and the Department of Homeland Security are putting all their other passengers at risk. This is especially concerning when FBI Director Christopher Wray is warning of a significantly elevated threat from foreign terrorist organizations, and the Department of Homeland Security is admitting that record numbers of known terrorists have crossed the southern border.

For this reason, we urge Congress to include S. 4051, the Verifying that all Aliens have Legitimate Identification Documents Act (the VALID Act) in the legislation to reauthorize the FAA. The VALID Act closes this dangerous loophole by prohibiting air carriers and the Department of Homeland Security from accepting the CBP-One app, NTAs, or NTRs to board aircraft traveling to or within the United States.

The simple result of including this legislation is that every passenger on every flight operating in the United States will have presented verifiable photo identification prior to boarding. If the VALID Act is not included in the FAA reauthorization legislation, the FAA will not be able "to provide the safest…aerospace system in the world." American air travelers will potentially be put in harm's way directly at the hands of the Department of Homeland Security.

Sincerely,

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