



Office of the City Clerk

City Hall
121 N. LaSalle St.
Room 107
Chicago, IL 60602
www.chicityclerk.com

Legislation Text

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RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, On May 15, 2016, approximately 450 American Airlines customers at O'Hare International Airport (O'Hare) missed flights due to security lines of more than two hours; and

WHEREAS, Security lines of nearly three hours have been reported at Midway International Airport (Midway), and more than 2 million people have viewed a video showing the security line stretch nearly all the way the CTA Orange Line station; and

WHEREAS, Transportation Safety Administration (TSA) screeners nationwide numbered 45,000 in 2011 and now total 42,525; and

WHEREAS, TSA workers at O'Hare dropped from 2,045 in 2012 to 1,932 last year; and

WHEREAS, Chicago's airports are among the busiest in the world having served more than 90 million passengers in 2015; and

WHEREAS, The TSA's Screening Partnership Program permits airports to have passenger and baggage screening performed by qualified private contractors under federal oversight and in compliance with all TSA security screening procedures; and

WHEREAS, Twenty-one U.S. airports, including San Francisco International and Kansas City International, employ their own screeners under the Screening Partnership Program; and

WHEREAS, In February, citing chronic staffing shortages causing long passenger waits at TSA checkpoints, the general manager of Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport informed the TSA that the airport was considering utilizing private security personnel under the TSA's Screening Partnership Program; and

WHEREAS, In May, the director and the chief security officer of The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the operator of John F. Kennedy International, Newark Liberty International and LaGuardia airports, sent the TSA a letter highlighting the continuing inadequacy of TSA passenger screening services and stating that the Port Authority was exploring the merits of participating in the Screening Partnership Program to enhance flexibility in the assignments and operating hours of front line screening staff; and

WHEREAS, With the summer travel season approaching, current TSA screening operations will further extend passenger wait times, will add to the frustration of passengers travelling through our airports, and will ultimately have a negative economic impact on our city and the airlines serving O'Hare and Midway; and

WHEREAS, Though the TSA has committed to sending additional resources to Chicago's airports in an attempt to address our outrageous wait times, staffing increases promised and implemented at other airports have proven inadequate; and

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WHEREAS, Chicago prides itself on having world-class airports that can efficiently accommodate more than 90 million passengers each year and intends to take all reasonable measures to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of passenger screening; and

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and members of the City Council of the City of Chicago do hereby urge the Commissioner of the Department of Aviation of the City of Chicago to apply for the TSA's Screening Partnership Program to enhance flexibility in the staffing levels, assignments, and operating hours of screening staff in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of passenger screening at O'Hare and Midway.

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