

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 11, 2018

The Honorable Kirstjen M. Nielsen
Secretary of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Nielsen:

Congratulations on your recent confirmation and your commitment to safeguarding our nation in an increasingly globalized world. For international destination cities like Orlando, Florida, these efforts are critical to our security and thriving economy. We invite you to visit the Orlando International Airport (MCO) and learn how important Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) officer staffing levels are to our continued growth.

From 2009 to 2016, international passengers arriving at MCO grew by 89%, from 1.49 million to 2.83 million. However, the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority (GOAA) reports that over the same period, Customs and Border Patrol Officer staffing levels have remained flat at the airport's two Federal Inspection Stations (FIS). Even with maximum number of personnel in the facilities, the arrivals hall quickly overflows during peak times, forcing passengers to remain on aircrafts until previous arrivals have cleared Customs and Immigration.

In an effort to assist CBP in streamlining international arrivals and implementing greater risk-based processing, GOAA has invested \$95 million since 2012 to renovate Airside 4 FIS with larger processing areas, state of the art equipment, and renovated baggage claim devices. Additionally, GOAA has collaborated with CBP to utilize 39 multi-lingual Automated Passport Control (APC) kiosks, four Global Entry kiosks, and CBP's Mobile Passport Control App to minimize the number of passengers who must be processed "manually" while employing highest standards of security for international arrivals. Further still, GOAA has paid \$3,869,321 in CBP officer overtime under the Section 559 Program to help meet existing demand.

Given MCO's existing CBP staffing shortfalls, we were disappointed that the agency directed the transfer of ten CBP officers from the Port of Orlando to the Southwest Border Ports of Entry for Temporary Duty Assignments (TDY). To prevent further erosion of the Orlando Port of Entry's current staffing levels, we respectfully request that the agency:

1. Immediately suspend TDY assignments for CBP officers serving the Orlando Port of Entry.
2. Not issue any further TDY assignments for CBP officers until the agency reassess any methodology used to allocate personnel nationwide for current entries and processing times.

Like GOAA, the region, and the state, we eagerly anticipate the opening of MCO's South Terminal Phase 1 expansion, which will replace the smaller FIS facility, and accommodate additional travelers from even more international routes from across the globe. These

investments make clear that GOAA understands their shared mission with CBP and intends to be a good-faith partner in ensuring orderly and prompt processing of the ever-increasing number of arrivals. We are hopeful that in addition to meeting current airport needs, CBP staffing will grow to meet the increased traffic and ensure that MCO remains a secure, world-class gateway for millions of international passengers.

Thank you again for your commitment to our nation's security and economy. We hope that you will take the opportunity to visit Orlando International Airport and observe first-hand the partnership between GOAA and your Department's frontline personnel to fulfill CBP's mission at our nation's eighth busiest airport.

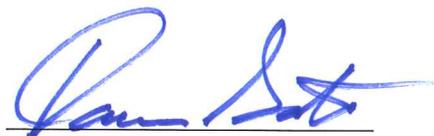
Sincerely,



VAL BUTLER DEMINGS
Member of Congress



STEPHANIE MURPHY
Member of Congress



DARREN SOTO
Member of Congress