

**Senator George V. Voinovich**  
**Additional Questions for the Record**  
**Nomination Hearing of Erroll G. Southers**  
**November 10, 2009**

1. What is your understanding of the timeline for the decision on whether or not to extend collective bargaining rights to Transportation Security Officers?

**Response:** *I do not have a specific timeline. If confirmed, I will conduct a thorough assessment of the current situation before making my recommendation to the Secretary.*

2. If confirmed, what will your role be in the ongoing review of whether or not to extend collective bargaining rights to Transportation Security Officers?

**Response:** *If confirmed, I will assess the operational and organizational issues and subsequently provide my recommendation to the Secretary. I expect to engage in extensive stakeholder outreach—both internal and external to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA)—to ensure that TSA’s security mission will always come first while preserving the operational and human capital flexibilities that TSA needs to remain a successful organization. I would make my recommendation to the Secretary only after this full assessment is complete.*

3. Do you believe collective bargaining rights should be extended to Transportation Security Officers? If so, how do you believe the labor relations system should be crafted?

**Response:** *If confirmed, I will conduct a thorough assessment of the current situation before making my recommendation to the Secretary. Forming an opinion at this time would be premature and would not allow the opportunity for research and discussion.*

4. If TSA provides for collective bargaining, do you believe TSA should engage in collective bargaining at the national level? Should TSA provide for bargaining at local airports?

**Response:** *If confirmed, I would first like to engage with all relevant stakeholders prior to making any recommendation regarding collective bargaining and how it might best be structured.*

5. If TSA provides for collective bargaining, will TSA alter the Performance Accounting and Standards System (PASS)? Will the PASS system be subject to negotiation? If so, which elements will be subject to negotiation? Please explain all changes you understand will be required to PASS if TSA provides for collective bargaining.

**Response:** *I support performance-based programs. If confirmed, I would first like to engage with all relevant stakeholders prior to making any recommendation regarding collective bargaining. At this point, it would be premature to comment on whether I*

would recommend any restructuring or elimination of the Performance Accounting and Standards System (PASS).

6. Your predecessors' maintained collective bargaining would limit TSA's ability to prepare for and respond to emergencies. What assurances can you provide me that TSA's mission performance will not suffer if collective bargaining rights are extended to Transportation Security Officers?

**Response:** *In my discussions with the Secretary and with many Members of Congress during my confirmation process, I have made it clear that I would like to review this matter thoroughly. Let me reiterate: as a 30-year law enforcement officer, the mission comes first. If confirmed, I will also reach out to prior Administrators of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) so that I have better insight into their decisions.*

7. If collective bargaining rights are extended via administrative action, will you seek and/or support legislation to codify such rights?

**Response:** *If confirmed, I look forward to engaging with this Committee and Congress should the Secretary or I determine that legislation is needed to address the Transportation Security Administration's human capital needs.*

8. If confirmed, will you seek to modify the current personnel flexibilities for the TSO workforce? Please explain what, if any, modifications to the benefits and processes available to TSOs you will pursue.

**Response:** *If confirmed, I would need the opportunity to assess operational and organizational issues, as well as to talk with stakeholder groups and former TSA Administrators, before making any recommendation to the Secretary on the TSA human capital system. Forming an opinion at this time would be premature and would not allow the opportunity for research and discussion. If confirmed, the TSA workforce will be a top priority for me, and I will explore education incentives, professional development, and leadership development to assist in attracting and retaining tomorrow's leaders within TSA.*