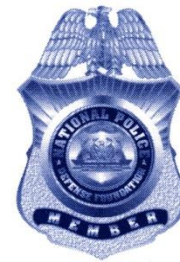




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"Protecting and Supporting Law Enforcement"

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SENT VIA FACSIMILE 973-645-0502

June 19, 2014

Honorable Robert Menendez
New Jersey State Senator
One Gateway Center, Suite 1100
Newark, New Jersey 07102

Dear Senator Menendez:

As the Executive Director of the National Police Defense Foundation, I am writing to request your support and assistance with preventing catastrophic budget cuts to the Federal Air Marshals Service (FAMS). Several news media outlets reported that over \$208 million in budget cuts were recently proposed. This amount is over a 25% reduction in the FAMS overall operating budget and, if passed, would undoubtedly have horrific consequences to national security and the dedicated FAMS workforce. This news comes on the heels of another dismal proposal to close six FAMS field offices. You do not need to be a law enforcement or air travel expert to understand that removing Air Marshals from airports and airplanes will create a potentially fatal vulnerability for America.

Federal Air Marshals are a strong and professional group of law enforcement men and women who sacrifice tirelessly to keep all of us safe in the skies and on the ground. As its parent agency, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is rife with numerous budget and personnel issues, which have bled into the FAMS causing the current conditions to exist. It is time to strongly consider removing the FAMS from the TSA and align this proud agency with another law enforcement agency or making them their own stand-alone agency under the Department of Homeland Security.

We cannot afford our enemies to take advantage of any perceived vulnerability in our national security. However, if you allow the proposed budget cuts and office closing to pass, you are telling your constituent's and all Americans that their safety at 30,000 feet is not important. You might just as well substitute scarecrows for Federal Air Marshals if you allow the cuts to pass.

I look forward to hearing from you soon on this important issue.

Respectfully yours,

Joseph Occhipinti
Executive Director

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The NPDF is an IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit foundation that funds the "Safe Cop" and "Operation Kids" Programs.