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July 31, 2003

The Honorable Tom Ridge  
Secretary, Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Ridge:

Today's *Washington Post* reported that your agency plans to "stick to a plan to cancel training for air marshals" because of budgetary constraints ("Agency Tackles Visa-Program Threat", July 31, 2003). This revelation comes one day after your agency reversed course on removing air marshals from certain cross-country and international flights because of the need to save on hotel costs.

Your agency's rationale for both of these decisions is the need to cut costs. As with yesterday's decision, I urge to you reverse the cutbacks and fully fund air marshal training. In addition, I have learned that your agency asked the Appropriations Committee in May to "reprogram" funds from port security and other programs. By contrast, you have time and time again said publicly that there is adequate funding for homeland security.

I urge you to make public the remaining proposed cutbacks to airline security and, in fact, *all* of your agency's proposed cutbacks to *all* to homeland programs so the public knows what is next to be scaled back.

It is troubling to find out airline passengers are becoming less secure every day because of cutbacks at the Department of Homeland Security, according to press reports. I am particularly concerned that these plans have been made despite new intelligence suggesting that terrorist may be plotting another 9/11-style attack.

I hope that these cuts are not symptomatic of across-the-board cuts to vital homeland security programs. I urge you to let us know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carolyn B. Maloney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

CAROLYN B. MALONEY  
Member of Congress