



HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN

September 22, 2015

The Honorable Peter V. Neffenger
Administrator
Transportation Security Administration
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Dear Administrator Neffenger:

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) is the nation's largest civil rights organization advocating for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) equality. On behalf of HRC's more than 1.5 million members and supporters nationwide, I write in regards to a disturbing report that has recently come to our attention involving Transportation Security Administrator (TSA) employees' treatment of a transgender woman at an airport security checkpoint in Orlando, FL. We urge TSA to conduct a swift and thorough investigation of the incident, and take immediate action to ensure transgender travelers are treated equally and with full respect.

The alleged encounter lasted more than 40 minutes and the allegations are deeply troubling. Although Ms. Petosky clearly stated that she is a transgender woman, a TSA officer repeatedly questioned Ms. Petosky's gender identity. Such questions are unacceptable. Moreover, when Ms. Petosky asked if TSA properly trains staff for interacting with transgender individuals, the officer reportedly responded that he "knew what he was doing."

The TSA officer's atrocious treatment of Ms. Petosky highlights the need for TSA to provide consistent officer training regarding transgender and gender nonconforming travelers. TSA should have comprehensive guidelines that are fully transparent to the public for TSA officers interacting with transgender individuals. In addition, the agency should require training to ensure that all officers are following agency guidelines. We urge you to take all necessary steps to ensure that officers nationwide receive the necessary training to conduct their jobs respectfully and efficiently.

We recognize the critical and demanding job TSA officers are asked to perform on a daily basis. However, treating all passengers with dignity and respect must be a top priority.

I look forward to your response. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or comments on this matter.

Sincerely,



Chad Griffin
President