



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on July 7, 2011

## Rep. Ron Paul Targets TSA Groping, Immunity

Liberty-minded Rep. Ron Paul (R-Texas) announced plans this week to re-introduce a bill that would hold Transportation Security Agency (TSA) screeners liable for violating laws on sexual assault, as well as laws on the production of lewd images and potentially causing harm through mass radiation of passengers with so-called “naked body” scanners. The legislation, called the “American Traveler Dignity Act,” would subject TSA employees to the same system of rules governing everyone else. “It means they are not above laws the rest of us must obey,” Paul explained in his July 5 “Texas Straight Talk” report announcing the decision to reintroduce the bill.



“The press reports are horrifying: 95-year-old women humiliated; children molested; disabled people abused; men and women subjected to unwarranted groping and touching of their most private areas; involuntary radiation exposure,” the Congressman and GOP presidential contender lamented. “If the perpetrators were a gang of criminals, their headquarters would be raided by SWAT teams and armed federal agents. Unfortunately, in this case the perpetrators are armed federal agents. This is the sorry situation ten years after the creation of the Transportation Security Administration.”

Paul has been a fierce foe of the TSA since before it was even created. In 2001, as the agency was coming into existence, the Texas Congressman was vocally calling for less federal control over airline security — not more. But his calls went unheeded.

Today, the TSA is under relentless attack nationwide as [air-travel boycotts](#) and [protests](#) grow. State governments — most explosively in [Texas](#) — have been contemplating ways to rein in the abuses. In Florida, calls are growing for county sheriffs to [arrest the screeners](#).

One of the most popular approaches appears to be holding TSA screeners responsible for sexual assault if they keep groping, molesting and “naked-body” scanning the traveling public without probable cause. Legislation in Texas that prompted [federal threats to shut down airports](#) could have landed transportation screeners in jail for violating the Fourth Amendment rights of passengers.

Paul’s bill would accomplish some of those goals at the federal level. And as the anti-TSA outcry continues to gain momentum, he hopes other legislators will hop on board this time.

“As we continue to see more and more outrageous stories of TSA abuses and failures, I hope that my colleagues in the House will listen to their constituents and join with me to support this legislation,” he said. The bill was also introduced in 2010 but never took off.

But the need for such measures is growing, according to critics. In addition to the routine violations of Americans’ rights at airports nationwide, the TSA has been [expanding its operations across the country](#) at bus terminals, train stations, stadiums, roads and more. And incredibly, TSA boss John Pistole —



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whom columnist Becky Akers referred to as “the pervert most responsible for the agency’s sexual violations of passengers” — is now seeking to massively increase the amount of “mobile” gropers who roam America screening the public.

On top of the unconstitutionality of the TSA and its routine humiliation and violation of passengers, there’s another sticking point — mass incompetence. The problem is so bad that the agency has become something of a laughing stock.

While screeners were busy [touching children and forcing an elderly woman to remove her soiled diaper](#), a Nigerian man with no proper ID and an invalid, stolen boarding pass was [allowed to fly across the country unmolested](#). TSA incompetence has become legendary in recent years as screeners routinely [miss most guns and fake bombs in government tests](#), even while hyperventilating over nail clippers and passengers who object to molestation.

Those are just a few of the reasons the opposition to the TSA and its wanton abuses are spreading like wildfire. But beyond removing screeners’ apparent immunity from sexual assault laws and other rules governing civilized society, Rep. Paul would eventually like to abolish the agency altogether.

"What we need is real privatization of security, but not phony privatization with the same TSA screeners in private security firm uniforms still operating under the ‘guidance’ of the federal government," Paul explained in his column, in keeping with his firm defense of the Constitution and common sense. "Real security will be achieved when the airlines are once again in charge of protecting their property and their passengers."



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