



Texas Republican State Rep. Gains Democrat Support in Opposing TSA

Notably, Simpson's bills were joint-authored by members of both parties — Rep. Eddie Rodriguez (D), Rep. Jose Menendez (D), Rep. Lois Kolkhorst (R), and Rep. Warren Chisum (R) — and co-authored by almost 30 other Texas lawmakers from both parties. One might have to look back in Texas history as far as the Battle of the Alamo to find *that* kind of unity for Texas freedom. In addition, Texas Eagle Forum, The Travis County (Austin) Republican Party, the Travis County Libertarian Party, Texans for Accountable Government, KeepAustinFree.org, and the Central Texas Republican Liberty Caucus have formally endorsed the legislation, which is gaining national attention with its slogan, "Support Dignity."

Simpson soundly defends the measures with references to the Lone Star State's own Constitution:

Traveling is not a criminal act. Treating travelers as criminal suspects and forcing innocent citizens to submit to humiliating and unreasonable searches without probable cause as a condition of travel violates protections our forefathers envisioned in Section 9 of the Texas Bill of Rights and the Fourth Amendment of the US Constitution. Contrary to what some TSA agents have claimed, we do not believe that you give up your rights when you travel in public.

Democrat Rep. Eddie Rodriguez added, "This is not a partisan issue. It's about preserving the fundamental right of personal privacy. And I'm glad to join my colleagues in both parties to defend the dignity of our fellow Texans."

Joint-author Rep. Jose Menendez (D) declared: "I support measures that make our nation's airways safer, but we cannot sacrifice the dignity and rights of our citizens in the process."

The Texas bills, as filed, would prohibit devices that use backscatter x-rays or millimeter waves to create a visual image of a person's unclothed body, as well as indecent pat-down techniques. Fines would be imposed against violators, and state and local authorities would be given authority to enforce the law and collect the fines.

The move against TSA violations is not limited to Texas. *The New American* has closely followed Simpson's efforts, and in an article [yesterday](#), outlined the measures undertaken by New Jersey, New Hampshire, and Pennsylvania. These states are also advancing legislation to ban TSA's new screening policies. One bill introduced by New Jersey State Sen. Mike Doherty would make offensive body searches a crime of sexual assault.

And another Texan famous for saying "No," U.S. Congressman Ron Paul (R), has introduced legislation on a national level. His American Traveler Dignity Act stresses the issue that airport security screeners



Written by [Kelly Holt](#) on March 11, 2011

are not immune from any U.S. law regarding either physical contact with another person, making images of another person, or causing physical harm through the use of radiation-emitting machinery.

These combined efforts, along with many grass-roots undertakings, are decidedly taking the states on the offensive. The Austin, Texas Airport Advisory Commission (tasked with making airport recommendations to the City Council) voted unanimously on December 14 to ban the AIT scanners from their airport, making Austin the first city in the country to formally oppose the abuses. However, the recommendation was narrowly defeated (4-3) by the Council in a recent meeting.

Interested readers and outraged victims of TSA “screenings” should remember that TSA policy is not law. Momentum to reverse the abuses is building. One response from a reader urged others to visit [Stop Austin Scanners!](#), using the website’s link to write members of the Texas Legislature and Austin’s city government in support of Simpson’s bill, closing with the comment: “You don’t have to be a Texan to stand up for liberty. Visit the website, click your mouse and help Texas draw a line in the sand that others will follow!”



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