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Statement by Secretary Napolitano on Actions by Federal Air Marshals on Board United Flight 663

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For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
Contact: 202-282-8010

"I commend the Federal Air Marshals on board United Airlines flight 663 last night, who swiftly responded to a potential threat to passenger safety while the plane was in flight. These highly trained individuals took appropriate and immediate action to secure the aircraft and communicate the potential threat to authorities on the ground—ensuring that the flight was met by TSA and law enforcement officials when it landed safely in Denver. I spoke to the Air Marshals this morning, and I expressed my appreciation for their vital service keeping passengers around the world safe from potential threats of terrorism—work that nearly always goes unnoticed. We always treat security-related incidents seriously until verified otherwise, and thankfully this incident posed no actual security threat."

Background

Since the attempted terrorist attack on Dec. 25, 2009, the Transportation Security Administration has increased deployments of Federal Air Marshals on domestic and international flights, along with many other enhancements to aviation security personnel and technology. The President's fiscal year 2011 budget request includes \$85 million for increased Federal Air Marshals flight coverage.

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