

Secretary Napolitano Announces \$26 Million in Recovery Act Funding for Screening Technology at Philadelphia International Airport



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U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Napolitano today announced approximately \$26 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding for the construction of two new inline baggage handling systems at Philadelphia International Airport—a project designed to infuse the local economy with Recovery Act dollars while increasing security and easing check-in procedures.

“These state-of-the-art baggage screening systems will enhance airport security, streamline check-in procedures for passengers and increase safety for TSA employees,” said Secretary Napolitano. “This project injects Recovery Act money into the Philadelphia economy while advancing our Department-wide focus on utilizing the latest science and technology.”

Secretary Napolitano made the announcement at Philadelphia International Airport’s International Terminal, joined by Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell, Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter, U.S. Senators Arlen Specter and Bob Casey, and U.S. Congressman Patrick Murphy. On Thursday, Secretary Napolitano announced \$15 million in ARRA funding for similar equipment at San Francisco International Airport.

The new inline baggage handling systems will create a more efficient experience for travelers by eliminating the need for passengers to walk their checked baggage to a screening location and wait before proceeding to the security checkpoint. The system incorporates enhanced explosive detection technology to provide on-screen viewing capabilities for Transportation Security Administration (TSA) officers conducting baggage screenings and reduces the number of re-scans and physical bag searches.

When construction is completed, Philadelphia International Airport will boast a total of four operational inline systems instead of eight separate screening locations—markedly improving airport efficiency. The new technology will also make work safer for TSA employees by automating the baggage screening process.

In awarding ARRA funds, DHS prioritizes shovel-ready projects that infuse resources into local economies quickly while meeting critical security needs. DHS has obligated nearly 20 percent of its ARRA funds to date, and is on track to obligate more than 50 percent by the end of September 2009.

ARRA, signed into law by President Obama on Feb. 19, committed more than \$3 billion for homeland security projects through DHS and the General Services Administration (GSA). Of the \$1 billion allocated to TSA for aviation security projects, \$700 million is dedicated to screening checked baggage and \$300 million is allocated for checkpoint explosives detection technology.

To learn more about the DHS Recovery Act projects, visit www.dhs.gov/recovery.

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