

COMMERCIALIZE AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL AND TSA

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TOPLINE: Congress should commercialize America's air traffic control (ATC) and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to make air travel more efficient and affordable.

BACKGROUND: America is one of only a few developed nations that requires federal control over air traffic organization and screening functions. These outdated and inflexible systems cost travelers and businesses tens of billions of dollars annually, including tens of thousands of years of [lost time](#) from flight delays and cancellations. Government-imposed ATC inefficiencies also constrain the supply and frequency of flights, [increasing prices for travelers](#). Annual congressional funding and federal procurement rules make it difficult to make long-term investments, adopt new technologies, and respond quickly to changing demand. Private security screeners are the norm in other countries and have [proven successful](#) in roughly 2 dozen U.S. airports.

Research [shows](#) that countries with commercialized screening and air traffic providers generally have better and more efficient service with fewer delays. Canada commercialized its ATC system in 1996 through a private, nonprofit, user-funded corporation. It now has more advanced capabilities than the U.S. and operates at [roughly one-third](#) lower costs. Switzerland's commercialized system reports [approximately 95% on-time](#) flights, compared with [roughly 75% in the United States](#). The [FY 2026 Congressional Appropriations](#) went in the opposite direction by stating that none of the funds could be used for "the privatization or separation of the air traffic organization functions of the FAA" (Federal Aviation Administration).

Action Items (Congress):

- **Allow the commercialization of air traffic control**, similar to Canada's system.
- **Allow the commercialization of TSA** while maintaining federal standards.

How It Would Make Life More Affordable:

- Fewer delays and cancellations would save travelers and businesses billions of dollars in lost time and productivity.
- Market-based funding would allow service- and safety-enhancing investments.
- Commercialization would prevent federal funding debates from hampering travel.

Related Legislation: 21st Century AIRR Act ([H.R. 2997 \[115th Congr.\]](#)).

BOTTOMLINE: Commercializing ATC and the TSA would replace costly, bureaucratic systems with customer-focused services that can modernize faster, reduce delays, expand flight capacity, and make air travel more affordable.