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## **Chairman Towns Requests Investigations into Allegations of Misconduct, Discrimination at FAMS Field Offices**

WASHINGTON – Chairman Edolphus “Ed” Towns (D-NY) is calling for investigations into disturbing allegations of widespread discrimination, retaliation and other inappropriate conduct at the Cincinnati and Orlando Federal Air Marshal Service (FAMS) field offices. The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform has received complaints from Federal Air Marshals (FAMs) that paint a troubling picture of a Service that is failing to respect important Federal merit system principles, including the requirement that all employees be treated fairly and equitably, and without regard to their race, sex, or national origin.

In a letter to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano, Chairman Towns requests DHS initiate a review of employment practices in the Federal Air Marshal Service (FAMS) to determine the extent of the reported problems, whether they are limited to the Cincinnati and Orlando field offices and whether additional steps should be taken to ensure that the Federal Air Marshal Service is fully complying with all Federal anti-discrimination laws.

Specifically, the Committee has been informed of systemic retaliation against potential witnesses and discrimination complaints filed by seven employees in the Cincinnati office. According to some sources, the number of recent Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) complaints in that office is as high as fifteen. The total represents a startlingly high percentage of the Cincinnati FAMS workforce. The Committee also received a picture of a whiteboard that reportedly was on display in the Orlando field office, and which was littered with exceptionally offensive material and used by Orlando office managers to harass minority employees.

One FAM has alleged that Orlando management "made a game of targeting African Americans, Hispanics, females, veterans, and men and women of alleged homosexual sexual orientation." The Transportation Security Administration has confirmed the existence of this "game board."

"I want to get to the bottom of these serious and concerning allegations. If we find that Federal Air Marshal Service is not fully abiding by all Federal anti-discrimination laws, we need to take

actions to ensure full compliance, including taking proper disciplinary actions,” said Chairman Towns.

In a separate letter, Chairman Towns wrote Richard Skinner, the DHS Inspector General (IG), asking for the IG to conduct an inquiry into the allegations concerning the "game board" at the Orlando Office. A Federal Air Marshal from Orlando has alleged that Orlando management “made a game of targeting African Americans, Hispanics, females, veterans and men and women of alleged homosexual sexual orientation.”

“Given that the alleged activity took place within the TSA, I believe it would be more appropriate for an investigation to be conducted by the Office of Inspector General, and request that your office undertake this investigation,” wrote Chairman Towns.

Chairman Towns is requesting urgent attention to these matters and expects responses soon.

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### Documents and Links

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[Letter from Chairman Edolphus Towns to Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano](#)

[Letter from Chairman Edolphus Towns to Department of Homeland Security Inspector General Richard Skinner](#)