

(Washington DC) After Congressman Gonzalez joined Congressman Solomon Ortiz and other members in sending a letter to President outlining their grave concerns about allowing Dubai Ports World to operate twenty American ports. Moreover, Congressman Gonzalez announced his co-sponsorship of legislation to stop foreign nationals from gaining control of U.S. airlines. H.R. 4542 would stop the Secretary of Transportation from promulgating a rule change that would change the standard used to determine what constitutes foreign control or ownership.

"Sadly, it appears that critical American transportation infrastructure is up for sale. In a post 9/11 world, we cannot allow foreign nationals or corporations to operate or control our nation's vital arteries of commerce. To do so simply makes us vulnerable at a time when greater vigilance and oversight is necessary in safeguarding our nation.

We must not allow the President to undermine our national security by giving potentially hostile governments ownership of our vital transportation infrastructure. The port security sale is the latest example of the Bush administration's willingness to outsource our national security. This is part of a greater neglect in securing our transportation systems and in making the entire infrastructure less safe and more insecure.

It's one thing to talk tougher security, but quite another thing to actually implement it, and I have to wonder how committed the Bush administration is to making America safe. We must not let foreign companies handle the port security nor the operation of our airlines."

As introduced by Congressman Jim Oberstar (D-MN) and Frank LoBiondo (R-NJ,) H.R. 4542 would stop the Secretary of Transportation from promulgating a rule change that would allow foreign nationals or corporations to gain control of U.S. airlines. Under current regulations, a U.S. airline must have at least 75% of ownership by American citizens. The Secretary of Transportation's proposed rule change would allow foreign nationals and corporations control of all airline operations save for safety and security decisions. If implemented, this rule change would turn aside 65 years of precedent stipulating American control of airlines flying on domestic routes or international routes secured through treaties.