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Patel](mailto:neal_patel@heller.senate.gov) | | April 18, 2016 | 202-224-6244 |   **Heller Travel Priority Approved by Senate to Be Included in Aviation Bill**  **(Washington, DC)** – Recently, U.S. Senator Dean Heller’s (R-NV) [U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Airport Staffing Amendment](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=5DEC63CB-603A-4D14-9340-1249EAB812E1) to the [*Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016*](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/9270731d-2db7-4c87-a2c3-b79f98bcdcef/Thune-Nelson%20Substitute%203464.pdf) (H.R.636) was approved by the United States Senate. Senator Heller worked with Majority Whip John Cornyn (R-TX) to include his amendment (#3507) in Cornyn’s broader package, referred to as the Cross-Border Trade Enhancement Act (Amendment #3565).  “I appreciate Majority Whip Cornyn for teaming up with me to get this important Nevada tourism priority approved by the Senate,” **said Senator Dean Heller.**  “Providing ports of entry the ability to form public-private partnership aimed at improving international passenger processing can increase tourism while improving national security. I hope my language will provide airports another tool in their toolboxes to improve operations and attract new international service.”  This amendment would allow a ports of entry, like an airport, to enter into public-private partnerships with the CBP to improve operations. Last May, Thomas Cook Airlines scrapped its plans to start twice-weekly nonstop service between Reno and London scheduled to begin December 19, citing CBP’s inability to process London arrivals at Reno-Tahoe International Airport in a timely manner.  **Background:**  Monday afternoon, Senators Cornyn, Heller, Flake, and McCain filed amendment #3565 to the[*Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2016*](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/9270731d-2db7-4c87-a2c3-b79f98bcdcef/Thune-Nelson%20Substitute%203464.pdf), that would encourage public-private partnerships to boost staffing and make infrastructure improvements at U.S. ports of entry without adding to the deficit. Senator Cornyn’s standalone bill and original amendment was limited to land ports of entry, but Senator Heller worked with him to include language that mirrors the Heller-Reid U.S. Customs and Border Protection Airport Staffing Amendment (#3507) filed early last week.  **Heller-Reid U.S. Customs and Border Protection Airport Staffing Amendment**   * Given the need for improved airport security and traveler processing efficiency at participating airports, this amendment would allow ports of entry to enter into public-private partnerships with the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to improve operations. Specifically, it would allow airports participating in the Port of Entry Partnership Pilot Program, known as the Donor 559 program, to privately finance:   + Salaries and expenses of up to five additional CBP officers;   + Salaries and expenses of CBP employees that support officers in performing law enforcement functions;   + costs related to the temporary placement or permanent relocation of officers; and   + Costs incurred by CBP to pay existing officers overtime.  |  | | --- | | **Heller Provisions Already Included in Committee Passed Bill:**   * The Small Community Air Service Development Program provides small airports with additional resources to attract new airline routes, however, the law stipulates that only airports considered small hubs as of 1997 are eligible for the program. Sec. 3202(b) updates the law to ensure airports like Reno Tahoe International Airport, who are currently not eligible but are considered small hubs based off current air traffic, can compete for these resources. This affects eight other airports. * Since Nevada is one of the six UAS test site locations, it will drive drone-related technological research and economic growth statewide. The bill includes [Senator Heller’s priorities](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=7F4A1158-C0BF-4D95-A10E-E1B21B721B4E) to provide Nevada’s [testing sites](http://diversifynevada.com/key-industries/aerospace-defense/uav) such as Reno-Stead Airport, Fallon Municipal Airport, Nellis Air Force Base, and the Boulder City Municipal Airport, with more autonomy and flexibility to partner with industry to test this emerging technology. This includes establishing annual research plans for test sites to contribute to authorizing beyond line of sight operations at these sites. * Sec.1302 provides airports like McCarran International Airport the flexibility to use federal infrastructure dollars for construction of facilities that offer multiple modes of transportation (i.e. bus, rail, Uber, and taxis). This provision could improve tourist access and facilitate economic development opportunities in Nevada. * Sec.2132 makes it clear that industries like mining can utilize UASs for inspections, which reduces risks to workers in underground facilities.   The following Heller amendments were adopted into the FAA Bill at the March 16th [Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/videos?ID=16D8FD5D-0DB5-4BEC-A323-48A6C4EBCD3C) on March 16, 2016:   * Heller-Cantwell [UAS Carriage Amendment](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/videos?ID=16D8FD5D-0DB5-4BEC-A323-48A6C4EBCD3C) directs the Department of Transportation (DOT) to establish a streamlined air carrier certification program tailored for unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) carrying property, like packages.      * Klobuchar-Heller-Blumenthal Human Trafficking Amendment requires air carriers to provide training to flight attendants to combat human trafficking, including training with respect to common indicators of human trafficking and best practices for reporting suspected human trafficking to law enforcement officers. Heller’s strong history on combatting human trafficking can be found [HERE](http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/pressreleases?ID=26685325-b451-44f7-8ba0-ca99fa0b9977). * The Schatz-Heller Tourism Amendment adds tourism stakeholders, like the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority, and the Elko Convention and Visitors Authority, to the Future Aviation Infrastructure and Financing Study provision in the bill. |   ###  [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_fb.png](http://www.facebook.com/pages/US-Senator-Dean-Heller/325751330177) [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_tw.png](http://twitter.com/SenDeanHeller) [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_yt.png](http://www.youtube.com/user/SenDeanHeller) |