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Testimony

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“Match Ready: Oversight of the Federal Government’s Border Management and Personnel  
Readiness Efforts for the Decade of Sports”

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Chairman Lankford, Ranking Member Fetterman, and Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Shawn Kinder, and I am the Global Corporate Development and Strategy Director at Ferrovia Airport.

Ferrovia Airport is a leading global private airport operator and developer, with over 25 years of experience in the aviation industry. The company has managed more than 30 airports worldwide, including significant current projects like the New Terminal One at New York’s JFK International Airport. Our prior portfolio has included being the majority owner of London Heathrow for more than 18 years, as well as various other airports in the United Kingdom, Europe, and Australia

For the past 20 years, Ferrovia has developed and managed critical infrastructure projects in North America. We leverage our engineering capabilities and innovation to transform highways, airports, and energy infrastructure that connect communities across the country. We are building and managing toll roads in Texas, Virginia, and North Carolina, and we are currently developing the New Terminal One at JFK International Airport in New York. More than 80% of Ferrovia’s equity value comes from North America, primarily the United States. With over \$30 billion in market capitalization, we are North America’s largest listed road and airport infrastructure company.

Ferrovia Airport operates as a trusted partner in the U.S. by focusing on long-term collaborations that enhance infrastructure, sustainability, and passenger experience. The company brings extensive experience in developing and managing airports, evidenced by its role in the New Terminal One project at JFK Airport. With a commitment to operational efficiency and cutting-edge technology, we work closely with U.S. airport authorities and stakeholders to drive innovation and improve airport capacity. Our approach emphasizes a

commitment to both operational excellence and community engagement, making us a reliable partner in shaping the future of U.S. aviation.

Travel is a major economic driver in the U.S., contributing nearly \$2.9 trillion annually and supporting over 15 million jobs across various sectors. It generates significant tax revenue at federal, state, and local levels, while also enhancing America's global standing through diplomacy and business. In 2024, international visitors contributed \$181 billion to the economy.

Over the past year, I have had the privilege of serving on the U.S. Travel Association's Commission on Seamless and Secure Travel. Throughout our work, the commission has focused on modernizing the U.S. travel system to enhance both security and efficiency. As part of this effort, we have conducted field visits to major U.S. airports, including Washington Dulles International, Las Vegas and Atlanta, where we met directly with leadership from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and other stakeholders. These discussions have been essential in identifying operational challenges and opportunities for innovation and collaboration.

Additionally, we have traveled internationally to examine global best practices in airport operations, gaining valuable insights into how other nations are addressing similar challenges. Our recommendations aim to promote the deployment of critical security technologies, streamline travel processes, and modernize visitor vetting systems to ensure that the U.S. remains a leader in global travel while maintaining the highest standards in security.

Our comprehensive report, which we released earlier this year, synthesizes the insights gathered from these visits, meetings, and collaborations. It provides actionable recommendations that cover a wide range of areas, including travel-related economic development strategies, the adoption of advanced technologies, and the modernization of visitor visa processing. The report offers a clear roadmap for transforming the U.S. travel system to meet the demands of the future, ensuring that we not only strengthen security but also create a seamless, efficient experience for travelers.

### **Golden Opportunity with a Mega Decade of Events**

Major events over the next four years such as the 2025 Club World Cup, the 2025 Ryder Cup, the 2026 FIFA World Cup, America's 250th anniversary, and the 2028 Olympics could contribute nearly \$100 billion in economic activity and bring an estimated 40 million international travelers. With the 2025 Club World Cup starting this month and the 2026 World Cup just over a year from now, we are operating under an exceptionally compressed timeline. These global sporting events will place immense pressure on our nation's aging infrastructure, so we must ensure that we are ready to handle the increased demand. This means addressing key issues in safety, security, and efficient travel facilitation.

We are grateful for the Administration's action to establish the White House Task Force on the FIFA World Cup 2026, which will provide senior leadership and coordination across government to ensure the U.S. is fully prepared to accommodate the millions of travelers expected for the 2025 Club World Cup and the 2026 World Cup. By bringing together the necessary resources and expertise, the Task Force will provide the foundation for a transformative mega decade of events that will benefit not only the travel industry but the nation.

Through this effort, we have an opportunity to drive innovation, modernize infrastructure, and ensure America remains a premier destination for travel and business. With careful planning and strategic investments, we can leverage this moment to further strengthen our economy, enhance security, and showcase America's role as a global leader in the travel and hospitality sectors.

The urgency of our situation cannot be overstated. While other nations have had decades to prepare for major international events, we are attempting to modernize our entire travel infrastructure in a much shorter period of time. This requires not just funding, but critical coordination, streamlined approval processes, and immediate action on proven solutions to ensure lasting reform.

### **Key Recommendations**

In our report, we created a comprehensive blueprint for the future of American travel. Our proposed solutions focus on transforming the entire travel experience, from planning to arrival, to ensure a seamless and secure process for travelers. We encourage Congress and the administration to ensure a similar sustainable model that prioritizes travel policy and drives meaningful progress for decades to come.

Our full report and recommendations can be viewed at [showcaseamericantravel.org](https://showcaseamericantravel.org) and I have included an executive summary of the report as an addendum to my testimony.

I would like to highlight some key recommendations of the report that require immediate implementation to meet our rapidly approaching deadlines:

**Biometrics.** Accelerating the adoption of biometric technologies to enhance the efficiency and security of air travel is critical to meeting the travel demands of tomorrow. Given that we have just over a year to prepare for World Cup volumes, federal agencies must fast-track biometric deployment timelines and eliminate bureaucratic delays that could derail implementation. Supporting the widespread implementation of biometric screening at key airport touchpoints, including check-in, security, and customs, would streamline passenger processing and reduce wait times. Additionally, collaboration between federal agencies, airlines, and technology providers is essential to ensure interoperability and scalability across the national and international travel network. A coordinated effort to

integrate biometric solutions into the traveler journey will bolster both security and customer experience, aligning with the Commission's goal of a more seamless, secure travel ecosystem. These are proven technologies that add efficiency to the processing, safety to the security ecosystem, and appropriately protect the personal security rights of travelers.

**Artificial Intelligence.** AI is critical to meeting the demands of the growth in travel, and its adoption should be accelerated to keep pace with increasing travel volumes. The current testing and procurement cycles are too slow for our compressed timeline—we need emergency authorization processes and expedited deployment schedules. AI-driven systems for checked baggage and carry-on luggage screening, for instance, can automate threat detection and enhance the accuracy and speed of screening processes—enabling officers to focus on areas of higher risk. By accelerating the deployment of these technologies, airports and security agencies can significantly reduce delays and improve passenger flow, ensuring a more seamless and efficient experience. With the continued rise in travel, accelerating the integration of AI is essential to maintaining security while meeting the evolving needs of the industry.

### **Scalable Solutions for All Airport Sizes.**

One critical lesson from our Commission's work is that technological solutions must be scalable across airports of all sizes. The upcoming global events will stress not just major international gateways, but also smaller and medium-hub airports that may experience unprecedented volumes—such as airports serving Oklahoma's softball and canoe slalom Olympic venues, or regional airports that become staging points for multi-destination itineraries or gateways to National Parks during America's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations.

Technology can be the great equalizer, allowing smaller airports to achieve efficiency and security standards comparable to major hubs without requiring massive infrastructure investments. At Ferrovial, we have successfully implemented scalable biometric and AI systems across our diverse portfolio—from Heathrow's 80 million annual passengers to Aberdeen's 3 million passengers annually.

The same core technologies can be configured and deployed proportionally, ensuring that a traveler experiences consistent, seamless processing whether they're arriving at JFK or a regional gateway. This scalability is essential for maintaining security standards while accommodating the complex, multi-city travel patterns we expect during the mega decade of events.

### **A new P3 model for airports.**

Public-Private Partnerships (P3s) offer a valuable approach to modernizing U.S. airports by leveraging private sector capital, operational expertise, and innovation. With growing travel demand and limited public resources, P3s can help accelerate infrastructure upgrades,

enhance the traveler experience, and introduce new technologies—without relying solely on taxpayer funding. Importantly, privately funded airport development in the U.S. market is not a wholesale transfer of control. Rather, it is a strategic partnership in which the airport or airport authority retains regulatory oversight, while the private partner assumes responsibility capital investment or specific operational areas in the infrastructure.

P3s can make airports more agile and responsive to evolving needs—from deploying touchless identity systems to achieving environmental sustainability goals. These partnerships are not one-size-fits-all solutions; they are tailored strategies that unlock value when public objectives and private capabilities are aligned. Private-sector investment in these assets is a tool to deliver on a public mission—ensuring communities across America have access to high-quality, modern air service that supports economic growth and connectivity. The path to long-term competitiveness in the U.S. airport system may well lie in embracing partnerships with private sector innovators to advance the modernization of our national airport infrastructure—a goal this Committee has long worked to support.

The New Terminal One at JFK will welcome many of the athletes, teams, spectators, and international travelers attending the World Cup, the Olympics, and America 250 when it opens in the summer of 2026. We would like to thank U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the Transportation Security Administration for their strong collaboration in helping us design operations that both facilitate traveler movement and uphold the global standard for border and aviation security. The success at New Terminal One—and in future projects—depends on continued partnership and close coordination with our federal and state and local regulators, air carriers, and traveling public to meet the long-term growth of global travel.

## **Conclusion.**

In conclusion, I would like to thank Chairman Lankford, Ranking Member Fetterman, and the distinguished members of this Subcommittee for the opportunity to testify today. With just over one year until the 2026 World Cup begins and less than three years until the 2028 Olympics, we have a narrow window to implement the infrastructure improvements and technological advances necessary to handle an unprecedented influx of international visitors. The economic opportunity before us—nearly \$100 billion in activity and 40 million international travelers—demands immediate action.

Drawing from both our global airport expertise and the Commission's comprehensive research, I can confidently say that the solutions exist. We have identified proven technologies, successful partnership models, and actionable implementation strategies. What we need now is swift coordination between federal agencies, strategic investment in modernization, and enhanced public-private partnerships that leverage industry expertise and private capital.

Time is our most critical but fleeting resource. I encourage the Subcommittee to support the recommendations outlined in our report and prioritize rapid deployment of biometric systems, AI-enhanced screening technologies, and expanded P3 models that can accelerate capacity building across airports of all sizes. These efforts will require unprecedented collaboration across the public and private sectors.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to testify, and I stand ready to work with this Committee, federal agencies, and industry partners to ensure the U.S. is not just prepared but sets a new global standard for travel excellence during this transformative decade.