

# The Transportation Security Screening Modernization Act (H.R. 5840) Offers Potentially Significant Benefits to the Transportation & Logistics Industry

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During a presidential election year, it is very difficult to get both sides of the aisle to agree on anything. However, thus far, the Transportation Security Screening Modernization Act (H.R. 5840) recently passed by the Senate and House Homeland Security committees appears to be an exception. This bill, which will modernize and streamline security screening processes and improve the efficiency and safety of transportation operations, should greatly benefit both shippers and motor carriers. This article delves into the key aspects of H.R. 5840 and the benefits it potentially offers to shippers and motor carriers, highlighting the implications for security, operational efficiency, and compliance.

## Understanding H.R. 5840: Key Provisions

The goal of H.R. 5840 is to modernize the current security screening processes used across various transportation sectors, including trucking. The bill proposes several reforms for the purpose streamlining and driving efficiencies with Transportation Security Administration (TSA) protocols. H.R. 5840 attempts to accomplish this goal primarily by using technology and increasing collaboration between the public and private sectors. Key provisions of the bill include:

- 1. Technology Advancements:** H.R. 5840 emphasizes the integration of new technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance and drive efficiencies within the TSA screening process. The new technologies aim to detect potential threats more effectively, thereby reducing the need and volume of manual inspections by the TSA that cause delays in the current screening process.
- 2. Data Sharing:** H.R. 5840 increases data sharing between the TSA and shippers and motor carriers. With an increase in the depth and frequency of security-related information being exchanged between the TSA and the shipper or motor carrier, the anticipated result is that H.R. 5840 will create a more proactive and efficient TSA screening process.
- 3. Streamlining of Processes:** H.R. 5840 aims to reduce delays associated with TSA security screenings by reducing overlap and redundancy within the TSA screening process. This includes using data to create a more risk-based approach to screening that prioritizes shipments that are of higher risk of having issues or concerns, while expediting the TSA screening for lower-risk or low-value cargo.
- 4. Funding and Support for Continuous Improvement Modernization Efforts:**

H.R. 5840 allocates funding to support research and development of new security technologies and training programs to continually improve upon the overall goals and purpose of H.R. 5840.

## Benefits of H.R. 5840

For Shippers and Motor Carriers, H.R. 5840 brings several potential benefits to their respective operations.

1. **Reduced Delays and Operational Costs.** Modernizing the security screening process will certainly reduce the potential for delays. Current security protocols are cumbersome and not data-driven, often leading to long wait times at checkpoints that impact delivery times and increasing costs. By streamlining these processes, motor carriers especially can save valuable time and reduce operational expenses.
2. **Enhanced Security via Technology.** The implementation and use of more advanced screening technologies will result in potential threats or issues being identified sooner, which should greatly reduce instances where the flow of goods is disrupted. Specifically, the implementation of artificial intelligence that can quickly analyze data and identify problems proactively should both increase overall security of the cargo while also minimizing the potential impact on the flow of goods.
3. **Improved Efficiency.** Prioritizing shipments that pose higher risks and expediting the screening of low-risk cargo will benefit the sectors that should want increased security screening, while reducing disruption to lower-risk or lower-value goods. H.R. 5840's targeted approach will reduce unnecessarily burdensome checks on routine shipments, which will speed up the screening process.
4. **Proactive Management of Issues or Threats.** The increased data-sharing provisions of H.R. 5840 should enable both shippers and motor carriers to be better informed about current security threats and compliance requirements. This allows both shippers and motor carriers the opportunity to adapt, which should further minimize operational disruptions.
5. **Potential Cost Savings to Shippers and Motor Carriers.** Fewer disruptions and less idle time for shipments should translate into cost savings for both shippers and motor carriers. Both shippers and motor carriers stand to benefit from more predictable delivery schedules via the overall reduction of delays and detentions that plague the current system.
6. **Faster Shipping Times.** Shippers and motor carriers should expect faster transit times for their goods via the efficiencies gained under H.R. 5840. This should be most beneficial for industries that have a higher volume of time-sensitive deliveries.

## Types of Freight that Benefit the Most from H.R. 5840

While all shippers and motor carriers will benefit if H.R. 5840 becomes law, certain industry verticals will reap significant advantages. Below are a few modes of transportation that stand to benefit the most if H.R. 5840 becomes law:

- 1.

**Tank Truck Transportation.** Shippers and motor carriers that transport hazardous materials like chemicals or fuel will greatly benefit from enhanced security measures that prioritize safety without causing undue delays.

2. **Refrigerated Transportation.** Shippers and motor carriers that handle perishable goods, such as food or pharmaceuticals, will benefit from the efficiencies gained. This should help preserve product quality and ensure timely deliveries, avoiding potentially significant loss or damage to cargo.
3. **High-Value Goods Transportation.** Shippers and motor carriers transporting electronics, luxury goods, jewelry, cosmetics, or other theft-prone items will benefit from advanced security screenings that offer better protection against theft while also maintaining efficient transportation operations.

If passed, H.R. 5840 should positively impact efficiency within the transportation & logistics industry. As of the date of this article, this bill will very likely be passed this year. Shippers and motor carriers should consider making preparations in the immediate future to adjust their operations to comply with the new law and reap the benefits of the more efficient screening processes-particularly if the shipper or motor carrier is engaged in tank truck, refrigerated, or high-value goods transportation.

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