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US-VISIT BIOMETRIC EXIT PROCESS TO IMPROVE NATIONAL SECURITY

Yesterday Department of Homeland Security (DHS) officials testified before Congress that the department is moving forward with implementing US-VISIT biometric exit procedures at U.S. airports to improve national security.

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Foreign travelers will be required in the future to provide biometrics at airports when departing from the United States. Yesterday DHS officials testified before Congress that the department is moving forward with implementing US-VISIT biometric exit procedures at U.S. airports to improve national security. DHS plans to publish a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking before the end of 2007 outlining its plans to incorporate US-VISIT biometric exit procedures into travelers' airline check-in process.

Foreign travelers already provide biometrics—fingerprints and a digital photograph—upon entering the United States. These biometric procedures protect their identities and prevent someone from using a fraudulent document to gain entry into the United States and threaten the safety of our citizens and visitors. By collecting biometrics when travelers leave the United States, DHS will be able to match this information with their biometric entry data to confirm that the traveler has left the country and to identify those who overstay their visa terms. DHS's use of biometrics protects U.S. citizens and visitors alike, while facilitating legitimate travel and trade.