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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

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October 22, 2014

Dr. Emilio Gonzalez
Director
Miami-Dade Aviation Department
P.O. Box 025504
Miami, FL 33102

Dear Director Gonzalez:

I am deeply concerned over the spread of Ebola throughout the United States and proper protocols at our ports of entry, such as airports, are an essential tool to help mitigate the risks of the disease spreading any further. With this in mind, I would like to respectfully request information on what steps Miami International Airport (MIA) has taken to prepare for this health crisis and how MIA is coordinating efforts between federal, state, and local authorities.

MIA serves as a port of entry for nearly 10 million international passengers annually. Although travelers to the United States from the affected West African countries do not enter the U.S. through MIA, our community must be assured that there is a coordinated government approach that is reliable and comprehensive for their safety and well-being. Due to our proximity to Cuba and given the fact that Cuban health professionals are treating sick patients in West Africa, I am concerned that Ebola might spread throughout Latin America which will pose a threat to our national security. According to recent reports, Gen. John F. Kelly, Commander of the U.S. Southern Command has warned about a possible Ebola epidemic in Latin America, which could potentially prompt migration to our country.

Ebola has become a global challenge and no country is immune but MIA must be fully prepared to withstand and respond to any possible epidemic not only in Miami but across the State of Florida. As the "Gateway to the Americas," MIA must take all precautionary measures to be able to handle Ebola affected passengers arriving or transitioning through our airport if necessary. As such, I ask that you provide an account of how MIA is preparing to mitigate the risk of a possible outbreak.

I appreciate your dedication and leadership on this issue. With your record, I am confident that MIA and the Miami-Dade Aviation Department will take steps to better inform our community on the plans in place. Thank you for your time and attention and I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Member of Congress

Cc: Mayor Carlos Gimenez
Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa