



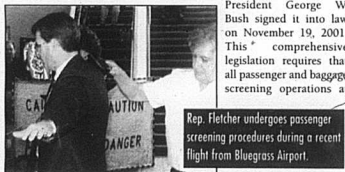
Securing Safety and Transportation Needs

New Measure Increases Airline Safety

In a nation that simultaneously supports over 6,000 aircraft during peak times on a typical day, safety in the skies is a major concern for everyone, including Rep. Ernie Fletcher. That is why he recently supported a major overhaul of aviation security for Kentucky and America's airports.

"This historic legislation will provide the highest degree of aviation security for our nation's travelers," said Rep. Fletcher. "It will help ensure that Kentucky's travelers are safe from terrorism while flying America's skies."

The Aviation and Transportation Security Act overwhelming passed the U.S. House of Representatives on November 16, 2001, and President George W. Bush signed it into law on November 19, 2001.



Rep. Fletcher undergoes passenger screening procedures during a recent flight from Bluegrass Airport.

commercial airports be under federal control within a year.

The legislation establishes a new Transportation Security Administration (TSA) within the Department of Transportation, which will be responsible for security for all modes of transportation. Within twelve months, the TSA will hire, train and deploy Federal screeners, Federal security managers and Federal security personnel and law enforcement officers.

Five airports will be allowed to participate in a new pilot program to test the effectiveness of private contracting versus the use of federal employees. After two years in the program, all airports will be allowed the option of having the Federal government contract with private firms to provide screening services.

Other requirements of the Aviation and Transportation Security Act:

- Deployment of Federal Air Marshals for all flights
- 100% screening of checked baggage by the end of 2002.
- Ability to hire, fire, and determine conditions of employment for screeners.
- Screeners must be United States citizens
- Federal background checks for airport personnel with access to secure areas.
- Veterans' preference for security positions

Providing for Central Kentucky's Transportation Needs

Rep. Fletcher has been able to secure over \$5.4 million for Central Kentucky's transportation needs for 2002. The funding was included in the final appropriations bill that funds the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The legislation includes the following funding for the 6th Congressional District: \$2,000,000 for a new transportation initiative at the University of Kentucky Academy for Community Transportation Innovation, \$1,700,000 for Central Kentucky airports, \$878,000 for transit systems serving the disabled and elderly of Central Kentucky, and \$850,000 for road improvement projects.

"Investing in a strong transportation infrastructure will better position Central Kentucky to maintain and attract industry to our region," said Rep. Fletcher. "Economic growth is dependent upon efficient mobility, so it is vitally important that we provide for our transportation needs."

Fletcher Urges Patience Following Anthrax Exposure

Washington Office Mail Handling Will Delay Responses

On October 17, 2001, Rep. Ernie Fletcher and his Washington staff were notified that all congressional office mail would be impounded and service disrupted for an indefinite period to conduct tests following Anthrax exposure in several offices and on mail service equipment.

Until recently, the Washington office had not received any mail since October 17. Although his office will attempt to answer the mail as it arrives in small amounts, some mail may be lost or destroyed due to contamination. Rep. Fletcher encourages constituents to communicate with his office through e-mail at www.house.gov/fletcher when possible.



Guest Guard (U) Jo Sarah (left) of Richmond recently stopped by Rep. Fletcher's Washington office to discuss her new assignment involving the Anthrax exposure on Capitol Hill.



Securing Benefits for Kentucky's Veterans

Fletcher Works to Provide Long Promised Benefits

Last year, as American Armed Forces were fighting the war against terrorism, Rep. Ernie Fletcher helped honor Kentucky's 300,000 Veterans at two Veterans' Day services in Lexington and Frankfort. During his remarks, he thanked all Veterans for their dedicated service to America and commended them for sacrifices they have made for others. In wake of the September 11, 2001, attacks, it sets a positive example for today's generation to follow.

One of the best ways to honor Kentucky's Veterans is to ensure that they receive their hard earned and long promised benefits. Since entering Congress in 1999, Rep. Fletcher, an Air Force Veteran, has fought and will continue to fight for Kentucky's Veterans.

In 2001, Rep. Fletcher supported the following legislation that has been signed into law by President Bush:

- **VA-HUD Appropriations Act** - Increases total spending for the Department of Veterans Affairs by \$4.3 billion.
- **Veterans Survivor Benefits Improvement Act** - Creates new life insurance and health care benefits for up to two million eligible spouses and children of Veterans.
- **World War II Memorial** - Establishes a national memorial for World War II Veterans on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.



Rep. Fletcher discusses Veterans' issues while paying tribute to Kentucky's Veterans at the Memorial Day Service at Lexington's Veterans Cemetery.

In 2001, Rep. Fletcher voted for passage of the following legislation in the U.S. House of Representatives:

- **Veterans Hospital Emergency Repair Act** - Authorizes \$550 million to repair dilapidated and obsolete medical facilities, addressing patient safety, privacy and accommodation for disabled Veterans.
- **Veterans Benefits Act of 2001** - Provides a cost-of-living adjustment and increases the compensation to disabled Veterans and their survivors by \$2.7 billion over five years.
- **Homeless Veterans Assistance Act** - Authorizes the VA Secretary to establish new housing programs to serve homeless Veterans. Would provide nearly \$60 million for the VA's Homeless Grant and Per Diem Program.
- **21st Century Montgomery GI Bill Enhancement Act** - Increases the Montgomery GI Bill education benefit by 70 percent over three years.

Rep. Fletcher believes significant strides have been made for Veterans this year, but there is still work to be done. Currently, retired Veterans do not receive compensation for service-connected disabilities concurrently with retirement pay. That is why he cosponsored H.R. 303, legislation to end this unfair practice and provide Veterans with the benefits they deserve.

He and his staff continue to work with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs

to ensure that quality health care remains in Central Kentucky. He is working to ensure that primary care will be expanded at the VA Medical Center on Cooper Drive in Lexington and that long-term health care will continue to be available at the Leestown Veterans' facility.



Rep. Fletcher helps lay a wreath at the Memorial for Fallen Soldiers at the Lexington Police Firefighters Candlelight Memorial at Phoenix Park.

A Time for Thanking and Remembering Our Troops

As we begin a New Year, Rep. Ernie Fletcher recognizes and thanks the outstanding American men and women fighting for freedom's preservation. We offer our patriotic gratitude and support for these dedicated individuals. Over the past several months, America has eliminated the Taliban and al Qaeda networks in Afghanistan and liberated her people through courageous and decisive action.

However, in a time of victory, we must also pause to remember those who paid the ultimate price to protect our freedom in this war on terrorism. Kentucky in particular has contributed significantly to our victory and feels the sting of loss. As an Air Force fighter pilot during

the height of the Cold War, Rep. Fletcher understands the danger America's Armed Forces face during combat and joins all Kentuckians in appreciation for their service.

As we fight to eradicate terrorism, America remains confident that we will emerge victorious in our fight against evil. We will support the men and women of our Armed Forces for as long as it may take to defeat the enemies of freedom and those that support them.