DID JUST 170,000 PASSENGERS GET GROPED BY STRANGERS LAST WEEK? OR A MILLION?

You know how I mocked the White House for dismissing the problem of gate rape by saying only 170,000 passengers had had their genitalia groped by a stranger working for the government?

I noted that their pushback was potentially inconsistent. According to "administration officials," just half of one percent of all passengers—or about 170,000—get their junk touched.

> For instance, the administration noted that fewer than one half of one percent of the 34 million passengers who traveled on airplanes in or to the U.S. last week were subjected to crotch-area pat-downs.

But that same article quoted the DHS spokesperson saying that one out of a hundred would get groped.

> In airports where body screening technology is available, about one in every 100 passengers are given pat-downs, according to another official, Sean Smith, the DHS spokesperson.

Meanwhile, other sources say closer to 3% of passengers get groped.

> A Department of Homeland Security official writes that less than 3% of travelers get the controversial aggressive patdowns.
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> According to one Atlanta Journal

> Constitution report this week, there are some 24 million people expected to fly in American airports over Thanksgiving week. So 3% of 24 million is 720,000 aggressive patdowns in the U.S. this week, if my math is holding up.

Note, several things may be going on here. First, there's the question of how many people are flying. The White House says 34 million passengers have passed through security; Rozen is using AJC's number of 24 million. And there are several ways a person might get groped: if they opt-out of the RapeAScan machine, but also if they set off either the RapeAScan machine or a conventional metal detector. So the lower half percent may be just one of those subsets of the entire group that has been groped. Also, it may be that the numbers of gropes have increased (or decreased) as the procedure has been introduced across the country.

Frankly, I think expecting 170,000 people a week to have their genitalia groped each week by government workers to be unreasonable. But the numbers may be far, far higher.