



A bold voice for transportation workers

September 20, 2011

Complete a Multi-Year Air Safety Bill

Dear Representative:

Now that Congress has completed work on a funding extension for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), we urge you to turn your attention to swift completion of a multi-year FAA Reauthorization Act. Passage of an FAA bill is critical to air safety, will create more than 300,000 good jobs and will modernize our aging air traffic control system. Failure to complete an aviation safety bill due to issues that have nothing to do with the safety and expansion of our aviation system, will be a major setback for the 757 million annual air travelers who rightfully expect their elected leaders to be responsible stewards of our aviation system.

Aviation contributes more than \$730 billion – more than 5 percent – to our GDP with almost \$1.3 trillion in economic output. And 10 million Americans are employed throughout our economy thanks to the aviation sector. With that as a backdrop, failure to invest in the future capacity, technology and safety of air travel isn't just important to this industry and its employees – it is critical to the economy and our ability to compete in the global marketplace.

Given the importance of aviation to our nation, there should be no debate that failure to pass an FAA Reauthorization bill that funds aviation infrastructure and technology improvements, will lead to a degradation of aviation safety. During the partial shutdown of the agency in July, crucial projects – whether they entailed major runway improvements, enhanced lighting at key facilities or upgrades to air traffic control equipment – were suspended and put the agency further behind in its mission to maintain the safest air space in the world. 4,000 FAA workers were immediately furloughed and have to date not received back-pay to which they are due. Even for workers who were able to remain on the job, costly travel expenses could not be paid (many agency employees even covered their own expenses) and support functions from other employees were often eliminated. Construction workers at projects across the country were sent home and the FAA lost \$400 million in tax revenues that cannot be recovered, further harming our ability to invest in this vital sector. And as Congress fails to complete action on a long-term bill, NextGen initiatives – which will transition U.S. aviation to a GPS-based system – are at risk of stalling or being starved of the resources needed to make it a reality.

Furthermore, any attempt to repeal National Mediation Board (NMB) union election rules for aviation and rail employees or to amend the Railway Labor Act does not belong in FAA reauthorization. These efforts have absolutely nothing to do with aviation safety or job creation, and the new NMB election rules simply allow for a majority of those voting in a union election to decide the outcome.

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The aviation safety and investment programs of the FAA are critical. Congress must bring certainty and stability to this vital sector of our economy by passing a multi-year FAA reauthorization without further delay.

Failure to complete a multi-year air safety bill or allowing the FAA to shut-down at the expiration of the current extension isn't just a Washington debate – it will push us to the brink of making air travel less safe. We urge the House and Senate to complete a bill swiftly and send it to the President for his signature.

Sincerely,



Captain Lee Moak
President
Air Line Pilots Association, International



Gerald W. McEntee
President
American Federation of State, County and
Municipal Employees



Veda Shook
International President
Association of Flight Attendants-CWA



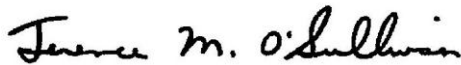
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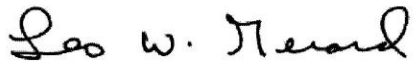
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