



**AFL-CIO**  
AMERICA'S UNIONS

**TTD**



February 18, 2026

Dear Representative:

On behalf of labor organizations representing hundreds of thousands of airline workers, including the pilots and flight attendants who lost their lives in the midair collision of a military helicopter and PSA Flight 5342, we write to urge you to cosponsor and pass the Rotorcraft Operations Transparency and Oversight Reform (ROTOR) Act, H.R. 6222. The bill is sponsored by Representatives Bob Onder (R-MO) and Don Beyer (D-VA). The Senate companion bill S. 2503, which was passed by unanimous consent, is on the House suspension calendar for a vote next week.

The 2025 Potomac River midair collision was a preventable accident. The ensuing investigation has provided clarity regarding safety loopholes that Congress must close immediately to prevent future tragedies and further needless loss of life. We appreciate that the House is considering its own response to the National Transportation Safety Board's (NTSB) Final Report, and we support appropriate implementation of the NTSB's many recommendations. However, any legislation passed by the House must include core elements of the ROTOR Act, including the requirement that all commercial aircraft operators equip their fleets with integrated ADS-B In technology.

The ROTOR Act ensures all commercial aircraft, including the military, use real-time tracking with Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B), a technology specifically designed to increase pilots' situational awareness and help prevent midair collisions. The bill requires a comprehensive safety review of congested and "mixed traffic" airspace and closes loopholes that have allowed military and other government aircraft to operate near busy hubs without transmitting their ADS-B location, speed, and altitude. Of great significance, the ROTOR Act mandates uniform, integrated ADS-B In technology in the flight deck for all commercial aircraft, with a common-sense alternative compliance mechanism for smaller aircraft.

ADS-B In displays the position of nearby aircraft and provides weather and other critical flight information to enhance pilot situational awareness, improve coordination in complex airspace, and help prevent midair collisions. The ROTOR Act's ADS-B In provisions, which reflect the recommendations of the NTSB Final Report on the DCA Midair Collision, mandate uniform, integrated ADS-B technology in the flight deck for all commercial aircraft. For pilots, flight attendants, and ground crew, it is imperative that any ADS-B In provisions require, like ROTOR, that such capability is installed in the flight deck so that it is integrated with the existing panel-mounted displays, flight deck audio controls, panel-mounted moving maps and ensures

visual and audio alerts integrate with existing audio and visual alerting capabilities used by pilots. In contrast, if integrated ADS-B In is excluded in favor of alternatives, including iPads, electronic flight bag or so-called “plug-in play” devices, it will simply provide a data feed in a location unhelpful to pilots that could visually interfere with their core responsibilities and add human factors-related risks. The NTSB Report found through simulations with tablet-based, non-integrated ADS-B In that such devices would require pilots to divert attention from cockpit instruments and critical alerts would not be heard.

Since 2008, the NTSB has recommended ADS-B In technology be installed for aircraft operating in controlled airspace. In the Board’s findings for the DCA Midair Collision, they are unsparing in identifying the limits of requiring pilots to use visual “see and avoid” scanning to identify and avoid aircraft and the deficiencies of tablet based, non-integrated ADS-B In. Per the NTSB, “for all pilots, ADS-B In information provided on a CDTI [Cockpit Display of Traffic Information] with alerting that is audible to the pilot would provide critical situation awareness to help mitigate the risk of midair collisions.” For the 2025 Potomac River Mid-Air Collision, the PSA 5342 regional jet aircraft was not equipped, and the NTSB found that if the aircraft had been equipped, the pilots would have had approximately one minute, instead of one second, to identify the helicopter. Such a difference in visualization, alerting technology, and situational awareness could very well have prevented the crash.

The Potomac Mid-Air Collision is the deadliest U.S. airspace accident in more than 20 years. The loss experienced by the passengers, the crew, and their families cannot be legislated. But this crash was predictable and preventable, and the only way to avoid another recurrence and honor the lives of those lost is to implement the ROTOR Act and its clearly delineated performance standards for ADS-B In as well as the remaining NTSB recommendations.

As the House considers legislation and oversight of aviation safety, labor remains united in ensuring this moment is not lost, and Congress establishes the highest aviation safety standards to prevent future accidents and any loss of life. Please vote in support of the ROTOR Act’s immediate passage next week.

Sincerely,

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)

Air Line Pilots Association, International (ALPA)

Association of Flight Attendants-CWA (AFA)

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM)

International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT)

Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD)

Transport Workers Union of America (TWU)