



AIR LINE PILOTS ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL

THE WORLD'S LARGEST PILOTS UNION • WWW.ALPA.ORG

1625 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20036 • 703-689-2270 • 888-FLY-ALPA

April 17, 2013

The Honorable Mary Landrieu
Chairman, Homeland Security Subcommittee
Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-128, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Dan Coats
Ranking Member, Homeland Security Subcommittee
Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-146A, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Landrieu and Ranking Member Coats:

As you begin the difficult task of appropriating federal resources for the Department of Homeland Security, I want to share with you information regarding the Federal Flight Deck Officer (FFDO) program. Let me state unequivocally on behalf of the more than 50,000 professional air line pilots represented by the Air Line Pilots Association, International (ALPA), we support the security mandate borne by DHS and the mission of protecting aviation security provided by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). Long before the creation of the DHS and TSA, we supported and advocated for a multi-layered approach to security, which the government today uses. The FFDO program plays a vital role as a cost-effective and critical layer in our aviation security system.

ALPA supported the concept of an FFDO program shortly after the attacks of 9/11. The FFDO program then was instituted by Congress with the passage of the Arming Pilots Against Terrorism Act (APATA) of 2002. Since its inception in 2003, the FFDO program has been tremendously successful as a strong, ongoing deterrent against the threat of aircraft hijackings. This is primarily due to an excellent basic training curriculum and the quality of the pilots who are selected to comprise its ranks. Today, many thousands of FFDOs protect the flight decks of our nation's airliners and defend more than 100,000 flight segments per month, at a very minimal cost to the US government and the American taxpayer. FFDOs receive no compensation for their service. In fact, they pay for many costs associated with their federal service out of their own pocket. These are highly-motivated, well-trained and dedicated professionals who *volunteer* their service to protect our nation's aviation system. Additionally, due to the numerous and varied flight segments operated by FFDO's, the program is a valuable

layer of security in our transportation system because it complements both object-based screening and risk based security. We know of no other aviation security program that can compare to the FFDO program in terms of effectiveness and efficiency, and we have been pleased over the years to see TSA repeatedly tout it as one of the agency's success stories.

Unfortunately, however, funding for the program has not kept pace with the growth of the program since it began nearly a decade ago. As a result, there is a waiting list of pilots who would like to enter the program but cannot because funds are not available for training. More troubling is the fact that the Administration has recently recommended to eliminate funds entirely for the program in their FY 2014. At \$25 million dollars, funding for the FFDO program is already marginal as far as what is needed to manage the program's current force and perform its mission. We urge you to oppose the Administration's plan and instead provide the program with appropriate funding to preserve the strength of the program and maximize its value to our nation's aviation security.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donald Lee Moak". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D".

Lee Moak
President

CC: The Honorable Barbara Mikulski, Chairman
The Honorable Richard Shelby, Ranking Member
Homeland Security Subcommittee Members