



AIR LINE PILOTS ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL

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

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February 12, 2015

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the over 51,000 professional airline pilots represented by the Air Line Pilots Association, International (ALPA), I write to ask of your support of H.R. 911, the Saracini Aviation Safety Act, introduced by Reps. Michael Fitzpatrick (R-PA) and Steve Israel (D-NY).

This legislation is named in honor of Captain Victor J. Saracini, who was killed when terrorists hijacked United Flight 175, which he commanded on September 11, 2001. In response to the horrific events of that tragic day, both Congress and the Federal Aviation Administration took steps to prevent terrorists from being able to commandeer commercial aircraft by securing the airplane's cockpit.

In 2001, Congress mandated the installation of reinforced cockpit doors. However, practical experience using these doors soon revealed a critical vulnerability - the reinforced door must be periodically opened during flight for pilots' meals, restroom use, and other reasons. To address this basic inadequacy with the use of reinforced cockpit doors during commercial operations, a light weight, wire-mesh gate – called a secondary barrier – was developed by airlines for installation between the passenger cabin and the cockpit door to provide an additional layer of security. The secondary barrier is engaged whenever the cockpit door is open during flight and blocks access to the cockpit. In the event of an attempted breach, the secondary barrier provides the flight crew with valuable seconds to react and close the fortified door before a hostile attacker reaches the flight deck.

Secondary barriers are inexpensive to install, and industry studies have found that they are a safe, effective way to add a layer of defense to the cockpit. While voluntary airline industry movement toward adopting secondary barriers began in 2003, the industry's commitment to deploying these devices has since waned significantly. Unfortunately, recent events have demonstrated that Americans still remain vulnerable to terrorist attacks. There have been dozens of air rage and hijacking attempts where passengers have gained, or endeavored to gain, access to the cockpits of U.S. and foreign airliners. The U.S. government has repeatedly and recently confirmed that aviation is still a target of radical terrorists and the threat of hijackings is real.

H.R. 911 would simply fulfill Congress's intent from more than a decade ago to make cockpits more secure by requiring the installation of secondary barriers on larger commercial aircraft on which the pilots need to periodically leave the cockpit during flight. We urge you to remember the heroes of September 11, 2001 and keep our skies safe from terrorists by cosponsoring H.R. 911.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Canoll', written in a cursive style.

Timothy G. Canoll
President