



AIR LINE PILOTS ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL

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

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February 27, 2012

The Honorable David E. Price
Ranking Member, Homeland Security Subcommittee
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Robert B. Aderholt
Chairman, Homeland Security Subcommittee
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Aderholt and Ranking Member Price:

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 53,000 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 perhaps the most important aviation security layer.

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 downplayed the importance of the program and, instead of recommending an amount of expenditure that is needed for this program to thrive, has instead recommended draconian cuts to the program. In his FY 2013 budget request, President Obama proposed a cut to the FFDO program of greater than 50%. At \$22 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. A cut of the size proposed by the Administration could easily lead to the program's demise. We urge you to oppose these cuts 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.

We ask you to support an increase in funding for the FFDO program so that the pilots who provide the last line of defense on our nation's aircraft may keep this program strong. It's not just good public policy, but responsible fiscal policy as well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donald Lee Moak". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Donald" being the most prominent.

Lee Moak
President

CC: The Honorable Harold Rogers, Chairman
The Honorable Norm Dicks, Ranking Member
Homeland Security Subcommittee Members