



PRESIDENT'S DEPARTMENT

AIR LINE PILOTS ASSOCIATION, INTERNATIONAL

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

1625 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20036 • 888-FLY-ALPA (1-888-359-2572) • FAX 202-797-4007

April 23, 2013

Dr. Jay Gouge
President
Auburn University
107 Samford Hall
Auburn, AL 36849

Dear Dr. Gouge:

On behalf of more than 50,000 airline pilot members who fly for 34 airlines in the U.S. and Canada, the Air Line Pilots Association, International (ALPA) would like to express its concern over reports that Auburn University is planning to eliminate its Aviation Management (AM) program. ALPA has an interest in this development, in part, because there are thousands of Auburn University AM alumni employed throughout the entire spectrum of aviation, many of whom are pilots who fly for ALPA-represented airlines. However, our interest primarily stems from the fact that there is a continuing and growing need within our industry for the kinds of aviation professionals that Auburn and other aviation schools provide.

Auburn has a long and distinguished history of excellence in the advancement of aviation and pilot training that has included the Wright Brothers and the Tuskegee Airmen, to name just two examples of the many beneficiaries of the University's influence. Auburn's aviation program has the distinction of being the oldest continually operated program of its kind in the U.S. and is the only such program in the State of Alabama. Auburn's AM educators have an impressive history of leading, supporting and facilitating the activities of the Aviation Accreditation Board International, a non-profit organization that sets standards for all aerospace programs taught in colleges and universities in the U.S. and around the world.

As impressive as these facts are, however, the most compelling reason that Auburn should retain and even expand its current AM and flight programs is that there is a strong and growing need for more and better-trained airline pilots and other aviation-related professionals.

- The Boeing Company has forecast that between 2012-2031, the world's airlines will need to hire 460,000 pilots; 69,000 of those will be needed in North America alone.
- *The Airline Safety and Federal Aviation Administration Extension Act of 2010* requires that after August 1, 2013, airlines use only those pilots who hold the Air Transport Pilot (ATP) certificate. Under today's regulations, pilots must have at least 1,500 hours of flight time to qualify for that certificate. However, FAA issued a notice of proposed rulemaking last year, and indicates that it will issue a final rule later this year, that gives preference to collegiate aviation programs, like Auburn's, to qualify their graduates to obtain an ATP with only 1,000 flight hours. Because of this development, we anticipate that collegiate aviation programs will become the preferred method for obtaining the education and flight requirements needed to become an airline pilot.

- By law, pilots may not fly past age 65, and the wave of retirements from those reaching that age began in December 2012.
- Numerous regional airlines report that they are having difficulty finding qualified pilots to fill their cockpits and some are offering financial incentives to attract the best candidates.
- Federal Aviation Administration forecasts commercial aviation to continue its long, steady expansion over the next 20 years. The industry has become more stable and profitable over the last few years due to mergers, consolidations and other measures, which should facilitate that expansion.

Our industry needs highly educated and well-trained aviation professionals, the kind that Auburn has produced for many years. We urge the University to take such steps as are required to ensure the ongoing vitality and success of its AM program so as to meet the demand for graduates today and into the foreseeable future.

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" and "M".

Captain Lee Moak
President