

THE PILOT PARTISAN AGENDA

INTRODUCING...

Representative Tulsi Gabbard

By ALPA Staff

As a member of Congress who has one of the longest commutes between Washington, D.C., and home, Rep. Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI) relies heavily on the viability and safety of the airline industry. Couple that with her seat on the U.S. House Homeland Security Committee, and the fact that her district is heavily dependent on tourism and aviation, she is a legislator worth getting to know to find common ground as ALPA continues to push its pilot partisan agenda on Capitol Hill.

Air Line Pilot had an opportunity recently to talk with Rep. Gabbard and raised several issues of interest to ALPA and its members. Here's what she had to say:

Q *Air Line Pilot*: ALPA-PAC supported you in your campaign for Congress. What did that support mean for you?

A **Rep. Gabbard**: ALPA-PAC's support was very important and much appreciated. I fought from behind to win a challenging campaign and earned the privilege of representing and serving the second congressional district of Hawaii.

I appreciate that ALPA-PAC was able to support me, and I hope I continue to earn that support.

Q How do tourism and air travel affect Hawaii's economy?

A Tourism is the single-largest source of private capital in Hawaii, and it is the greatest generator of jobs. More than 98 percent of visitors to Hawaii come by air, so tourism and the air travel that make tourism possible are incredibly important to our economy.

Q Do you see visa liberalization as a means to stimulate economic growth in Hawaii?

A More than half of the visitors to Hawaii come from the United

States, but a significant number of travelers fly in from Japan and other places in Asia, like China and India. The number of air passengers visiting Hawaii from these countries is climbing, and we have the opportunity to attract many more in the future. Anything we can do to make the visa process more efficient and convenient will open the door for more visitors to come to Hawaii and will serve as a boost to continued and sustained growth in our economy.

Q ALPA understands that a boom in tourism is good for the airline industry and good for Hawaii's economy. That said, we are very concerned that unfair competition from international airlines may threaten the future of the U.S. aviation industry and U.S. jobs. In places such as the Persian Gulf, we are seeing the rise of state-sponsored airlines that are able to buy new aircraft at financing rates not available to U.S. airlines and move into markets that U.S. airlines currently serve. What can the U.S. government do, in your view, to level the playing field for U.S. airlines in the international marketplace?

A As ALPA members know, air service is critical to Hawaii's economy. And I agree that it is crucial to maintain a strong, vibrant airline industry in the United States.

In Hawaii, we rely on both air cargo and passenger flights. The U.S. airline industry supports thousands of good jobs, and it allows visitors to experience the beauty and cultural diversity that our islands offer. When attempts to weaken foreign ownership restrictions came before Congress in past years, the Hawaii delegation, Senator Inouye in particular, led a successful opposition. He was a champion for working Americans and understood the importance of a



Rep. Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI)

strong U.S. aviation industry. I intend to continue his mission to support U.S. airlines and U.S. airline workers.

Q Aviation security is obviously a priority for ALPA members. You sit on the U.S. House Homeland Security Committee. Can you tell us what's on your agenda?

A Thankfully, since 9/11 we have been successful in preventing a terrorist attack on a U.S. airliner. However, we must remain vigilant, and we must ensure that we are using our resources effectively in a risk-based approach to aviation security.

I know that airline pilots and the Transportation Security Administration [TSA] are pleased with the Known Crewmember program. KCM is a smart use of resources and moves us toward risk-based screening. We have two Known Crewmember access points for airline pilots flying through Honolulu International Airport.

Similarly, I recently introduced a bill, the Helping Heroes Fly Act, which is intended to improve the security screening process for wounded or severely disabled service members or veterans. I have heard from advocates of members of the Armed Forces and veterans and found that the TSA's current Wounded Warrior Screening Program should be improved to address inconsistencies. Some wounded warriors have also reported a lack of sensitivity and respect for privacy during the screening experience. The Helping Heroes Fly Act aims to address these inconsistencies and ensure a more positive experience for our wounded service members and veterans.

I also joined several of my House colleagues in writing a letter to TSA Administrator John Pistole expressing serious concern and requesting that the TSA delay the implementation of a policy to allow certain knives on board. Our letter also

urged the TSA to review the policy in consultation with key stakeholders, like ALPA. In a post-9/11 era, this type of hasty and ill-advised policy decision is unacceptable and does not contribute to the safety of airline crewmembers or passengers.

Q Can you talk about how your military service has shaped you as a legislator?

A My experiences serving in the Middle East changed my worldview and deepened my commitment to use my experiences to effect positive change—not just in Hawaii, but across the country. It also deepened my understanding that what America and other countries of the world need are mutual respect and understanding for each another, what we in Hawaii call “aloha spirit.” In the military, my brothers and sisters in uniform were people of all different races, religions, and political parties. But this diversity made us stronger and never got in the way of our being able to work together as a team, toward our common mission: to serve our country. It is this aloha spirit that we need to practice in our daily lives, and specifically in our work, serving the people as their representatives in Congress.

Q Congresswoman, you fly nearly as much as ALPA members do. Any personal tips on long-haul flights?

A I travel to Hawaii at least once or twice a month now, so I have had many opportunities to take the 10-hour flight from Washington, D.C., to Hawaii. I make sure that I have catch-up work and reading to do on the plane, and usually have time to rest, refocus, and clear my mind. While in flight, I make sure to stay hydrated and get up and walk around, and do some in-flight yoga stretching. I always know that I will be home in Hawaii when I land, so that makes the long haul worthwhile. 🌐

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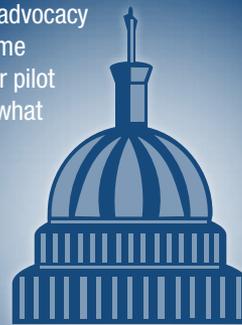
ALPA's Government Affairs Legislative Summit

This year's ALPA Government Affairs Legislative Summit will take place June 5–6, 2013, at the Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.

The summit will provide pilot representatives and pilot advocates an opportunity to enhance their advocacy and PAC leadership skills through hands-on training. Participants will gain the tools needed to become effective advocates and to increase participation in ALPA's PAC and grassroots programs within their pilot group. The meeting is an excellent opportunity to improve your legislative/political skills, no matter what your experience level is.

The summit—which will feature legislative briefings, workshops, guest speakers, and a Capitol Hill reception with members of Congress and staff—will culminate with a **lobby day on Capitol Hill** in which participants will apply their training while meeting with representatives and senators on a relevant pilot partisan legislative issue.

For more information, go to www.ALPA.org/legislativesummit. Please contact your master executive council if you're interested in attending.



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