



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

July 21, 2020

Dear Senate:

On behalf of the over 63,000 pilots represented by the Air Line Pilots Association, International (ALPA) at 34 air carriers, we write to you urging a *clean* extension of the extremely successful, pro-worker Payroll Support Program (PSP) as you deliberate over further economic relief to address ongoing harm caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Failure to extend this program will result in the loss of hundreds of thousands of American aviation jobs, and contribute to a further slowdown of our nation's economy and global competitiveness.

In response to the unprecedented threat the pandemic imposed on the U.S. airline industry and its employees, Congress – through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act – provided necessary relief to keep the industry viable. The centerpiece of the CARES Act's airline assistance was the worker-focused PSP grant program. Unlike past industry relief programs, the PSP prioritized, rather than subordinated, the livelihoods of nearly 1 million airline industry employees. By authorizing grant money to airlines *exclusively* for employee payroll and benefits, prohibiting furloughs, preserving collective bargaining rights, and reigning in corporate excess related to stock repurchases and executive compensations, the PSP represents both a historic achievement and an extraordinary success story.

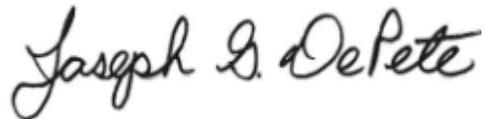
Unfortunately, the expectation of a U.S. aviation recovery has run into a resurgence of COVID-19. The already anemic demand for travel is now trending down at the precise time that the PSP is set to expire in September of 2020. Absent a clean reauthorization of the program, hundreds of thousands of aviation employees will lose their jobs through no fault of their own, as travel demand will remain sluggish well into 2021. Major air carriers, including American, Delta, and United already have provided legally mandated furlough notices for tens of thousands of employees in preparation for the expiration of the PSP program this fall, and we expect further layoffs by airlines throughout the fall. Beyond the human toll posed by these mass layoffs, the economic damage to the economy and the industry will be substantial. Airlines represent 5 percent of U.S. GDP and the severing of employment bonds will create irrevocable damage to the industry. A painful stretch of unemployment will place long-term constraints on industry capacity. And for pilots, who are subject to constant training and certification checks, simply returning to the industry and flying planes after long absences is not permissible and we risk losing a generation of pilot talent – leaving the United States at a global competitive disadvantage.

While we recognize that the CARES Act also provides \$29 billion in loan and loan forgiveness programs to help stabilize the airline industry, we are careful to note that the money – which has been distributed in limited amounts – is not directed to workers and can be diverted to a variety of unrelated airline expenses. In fact, the loan program's weak limitations on furloughs have no practical effect on the preservation of employment, as they sunset on the same date that the PSP program's furlough mitigation provisions expire.

Accordingly, ALPA urges that Congress pass a clean extension of the PSP through March 31, 2021, in order to stop preventable mass job loss and ensure pilots and other airline employees can provide the capacity the industry needs to bounce back quickly when the pandemic recedes. A simple reauthorization of the program requires no additional requirements or lengthy processes to secure agreements between the Treasury and airlines. In fact, *the airlines support this request*, and we remain committed to working with our industry partners to advance needed relief to this beleaguered sector.

We appreciate your continued commitment to the unique problems the COVID-19 crisis places on pilots and other airline industry employees. As we face an unprecedented employment cliff on October 1, 2020, it is vital that Congress intervene to preserve jobs, maintain the industry's ability to move passengers and critical supply cargo, and maintain this national security asset.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph G. DePete". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joseph G. DePete
President