



UAL MEC Statement

August 11, 2017

United Airlines Pilots Press Release Statement on First Officer Qualifications

There is No Pilot Shortage - Congress Must Not Rollback Safety Gains

In early July, Senator John Thune introduced an amendment to the Senate Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act which would undermine existing minimum pilot qualifications. Proponents of this amendment claim, despite facts to the contrary, that the U.S. is experiencing a pilot shortage which has negatively impacted the ability of regional airlines to operate. Interestingly enough, they have been making this same false claim for the last 30 years.

There are two problems with this amendment: First, there is no pilot shortage today. Second, and most importantly, the current rules were put in place to enhance safety for all U.S. fliers and they must not be rolled back.

If some airlines are short of pilots, it is due to their failure to offer adequate compensation, not because of a lack of qualified pilots. FAA statistics clearly show there are more than twice as many qualified pilots looking for jobs as there are job openings, with more than 25,000 new Airline Transport Pilot certificates issued during the past three and one-half years alone. Airlines and their lobbyists pushing for changes to these laws want to be able to hire less-experienced pilots to lower costs. Put simply, this path would trade proven safety enhancements for profits.

In the two decades prior to the enactment of the Airline Safety and FAA Extension Act of 2010, the airline industry saw more than 1100 passenger fatalities. Since the passage of that bill, there have been no fatalities on U.S. passenger airlines. Zero. The requirements which grew from this bill, for First Officers to have a minimum of 1500 hours of flight time (reducible to as low as 750 with military training), are directly related to this halt of airline fatalities. The current First Officer qualification rules have clearly provided an increase in airline safety and must not be reduced.

Airlines that offer adequate compensation have had no problems hiring qualified pilots and it should not be surprising that pilots seek employment at airlines that provide the best quality of life and career progression. Slashing first officer qualification rules will not change this fact.

Failure to compete in the marketplace should not be cause for some regional airlines to compromise airline safety in any way. These carriers must stop hiding behind this fake pilot shortage and Congress must stop putting today's hard-won safety record at risk.



Captain Todd Insler
Chairman
United Airlines Master Executive Council

[Link to Pilot Supply Infographic](#)

The United Master Executive Council (MEC) is the union's governing body representing the 12,700 pilots of United Air Lines.

The Air Line Pilots Association, International (ALPA) is the largest airline pilot union in the world and represents over 57,000 pilots at 33 US. and Canadian airlines.

Visit the ALPA website at alpa.org and the United MEC website at alpa.org/ual.



UnitedPilotsMEC



@UnitedPilots

SOURCE: Air Line Pilots Association, Int'l

CONTACT: United MEC, Kristen Miano, 847-292-1700, Kristen.Miano@alpa.org