



Transport Workers Union of America

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Legislative Office

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Dear Senator:

I am writing on behalf of the 70,000 airline workers among our 140,000 members, asking you to vote in favor of two amendments that will be offered to the FAA bill and against any weakening of them.

- 1) Please vote **in favor of the Durbin-Hutchinson amendment** to strip out pernicious language that would reverse pension relief granted to American Airlines last year. This would directly affect the pensions of our 35,000 members at American as well as undermine the financial stability of that company at a difficult time for the airline industry.

The language in the 2007 Supplemental leveled the playing field with other airlines that were given leeway in funding their underfunded pensions in return for freezing their plans. In return for similar but lesser relief American agreed to fully fund current and future liabilities instead of freezing their plan. At the time Senators pointed out that it made no sense to penalize the airlines that were 'good citizens', maintaining and funding their workers' pensions.

- 2) Please vote **in favor of the McCaskill-Spector amendment on foreign aircraft repair stations (FRS)**. This amendment would close a gaping hole in the safety and security of our nation's air travel by eliminating the double standard by which overseas bases, certified by the FAA to repair U.S. aircraft, are held to a completely different and lesser standard than similarly-certified bases in the U.S. With over one-third of all maintenance on U.S. aircraft performed overseas, this is no small matter.

a) A major loophole the McCaskill-Spector amendment will close concerns **drug and alcohol testing of airline mechanics** which Congress and the President have determined to be crucial to airline safety. This is currently imposed on all airline mechanics doing work in the U.S. but not on work done overseas.

There may be a second degree amendment offering an exemption to the drug testing requirement for foreign countries that oppose drug and alcohol testing. We are asking Senators to vote against any weakening of the drug and alcohol testing requirement.

It makes no sense to say that the safety of our aircraft requires that all mechanics be subject to drug and alcohol testing as part of determining their fitness for duty, then allowing drug addicts to repair our aircraft so long as the work is done overseas.

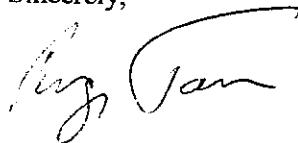
The United States Government already requires drug and alcohol testing for Mexican truck drivers operating in the U.S. so there can be no 'national sovereignty' issue involved. Nor should the desire to save a few bucks by sending the work overseas be allowed to take precedence over the safety of airline passengers. We impose U.S. health and safety laws on all food, auto and pharmaceutical imports to the U.S.; there is no justification for allowing a loophole in the case of airline safety.

b) The McCaskill-Spector amendment also requires for the first time **that the FAA inspect foreign repair stations at least twice a year**. This is far less stringent than the constant ongoing inspections that take place at U.S. repair facilities and would seem to be a bare minimum.

The Administration has issued a veto threat over this requirement, suggesting that we rely instead on foreign governments to inspect their own facilities. One wonders if they plan to allow China to apply its own safety laws to foods and drugs imported into the U.S. as well. That would make as much sense as placing the safety of our air travel system in the hands of foreign governments whose interests and standards may not be those of the U.S.

In conclusion let me repeat our request to vote in favor of the Durbin-Hutchinson amendment and the McCaskill-Spector amendment and against any attempts to weaken either. You will have the gratitude of our members who work so hard on behalf of the safety of our air traveling public.

Sincerely,



Roger Tauss

International Vice President and Legislative Director