



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF POLICE ORGANIZATIONS, INC.

Representing America's Finest

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June 15, 2012

The Honorable Thomas Petri
Chairman
Subcommittee on Aviation
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jerry Costello
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Aviation
United State House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Representatives Petri and Costello:

On behalf of the National Association of Police Organizations (NAPO), representing 241,000 rank-and-file police officers from across the United States, I would like to thank and commend you for your support of the Federal Flight Deck Officer program.

On June 6, 2012, the House of Representatives unanimously agreed to the amendment offered by Representative Chip Cravaack which would increase funding for the Federal Flight Deck Office program by \$10 million to \$35.5 million. The Federal Flight Deck Officers Association is a member of NAPO. Together, we have a vested interest in protecting passenger safety.

In 2002 Congress created a program that provided for volunteer pilots to receive weeklong training and follow-up on weapons handling. The exact number of pilots who take advantage of this program is classified. However, there is a backlog of over 700 pilots waiting to complete training. Despite the need for funding, the Administration proposed earlier this year to cut in half the budget for this program.

According to the Air Line Pilots Association, the calculated cost is \$15 per flight for armed pilots compared with more than \$3,000 for federal air marshals. This is a cost effective program that serves as a last line of defense for airline passengers.

Helping to protect our nation from potential gaps in the enforcement of homeland security is one of NAPO's top priorities. NAPO applauds the House chamber for their response which increased funding for armed-pilot training. If you have any questions on how NAPO can further support this training program, please feel free to contact me, or NAPO's Director of Government Affairs, Rachel Hedge, at (703) 549-0775.

Sincerely,

William J. Johnson
Executive Director

CC: U.S. Senate