

From: abus@comcast.net
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To:
Subject: SPC/PPF Update

To all:

Last week we all saw HR-2881, the House version of FAA Reauthorization pass with the language that ALPA demands. The SPC did offer an amendment to protect ALL jobs which was blocked prior to introduction by Chairman Oberstar in the Rules Committee. It was never voted on. Why? I attended the hearing, and as one R- Congressional senior staffer commented later, ALPA. Money talks in Congress, period. In the Rules Committee it was also made very clear by Congressman Oberstar that the "pilot language" was in his Bill. He had made it clear for some time that he would not allow a stand alone to go forward. The only thing in D.C. that is factual is that what someone says or does yesterday is old news and may not be true today.

When HR-2881 went to the floor for a one hour debate, some issues with the Bill were argued on both sides. The Ways and Means Committee had granted a 90 day extension of funding at previous fiscal year funding levels to keep the money flowing, but it pointed out that HR-2881 does not conform with the required "pay as you go" and as such is not likely to become law. The Congressional Budget Office mark-up of the Bill points out the high levels of over expenditures in this Bill. There are some good features included that both sides want like "the passenger bill of rights". When it was restated in the floor debate that the President was set on a Veto of this legislation for many reasons that do not include us, that freed many Republicans to vote for HR-2881 to claim that they voted for the good provisions. That's just the political reality. Noone I have talked to in the Congress or elsewhere believes that this legislation is going anywhere soon, and certainly not in this form. The same is true of Transportation and HUD. The age change for pilots is caught in the middle of a political sandwich in Bills that are so far apart in structure that they offer little hope for a rapid fix. Some members of the Senate have gone public that they won't waste their time by even allowing discussion in conference. Whether or not that happens is speculation.

The common thread in most offices and appointments we have concluded is that the Congress is just as anxious as we are for the Court of Appeals to make the ruling for them. Each day makes it more obvious that this will be where the issue is finally resolved. To that end everyone can be thankful that this

organization put the matter before the Court of Appeals.

The latest e-mails from APAAD gives me the sense that they too realize the impact that the potential court ruling is having on the whole process. They try under their prospective philosophy, and we push for equity for all. Nearly everything is worth the effort in this fight, but one thing should be clear. Calling for the "Oberstar/ALPA" language to be construed as "EQUITY" is beyond ridiculous. Thousands of airline pilots have served in combat for this nation and many are there now. When your reserve or national guard unit is activated, you leave the commercial world for the military role. While I can understand that someone who has never served in the military can be blind to the sacrifice veterans have made, it is no less inexcusable. When a pilot returns from Iraq having put his life on the line for this country; only to return at age 60 and no longer able to work as a pilot in his own country, what do you tell him? Are you going to tell him that "prospective only" reflects equity? Are you going to tell him that he's a casualty for your success? I suggest the next time you're in D.C. take a few hours and visit Walter Reed Hospital instead of a Congressional office. Maybe then you'll understand sacrifice, and that it's not really "all about me".

I will be in D.C. again this week for meetings scheduled on our behalf with various offices. This fight will continue until the court rules. I can't predict with certainty when that will be, but that won't stop our efforts until they do. I wish you well until I can pass along more information. I do want to thank everyone for the contributions for the PR campaign and ROLL CALL ads. It has been a fantastic result, and the next ad will be finished this week.

Lew Tetlow
SPC, Pres.