

# APAAD

## Airline Pilots Against Age Discrimination

September 5, 2007

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Marion Blakey  
Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration  
Washington, DC

Dear Administrator Blakey,

The pilots of APAAD would like to thank you for your service to our country. The job of Administrator is a thankless one, but it also one of the most important in federal government. Your stewardship at the agency has helped to make the US aviation system the envy of the world.

Unfortunately, there is always more to be done. Right now, commercial aviation is losing more than 200 of its most experienced pilots every month due to an archaic rule that forces our safest pilots to retire on their 60<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Your agency has announced its intention to change the rule, but completion is not expected for at least two years. The Congress is also seeking to change the rule through the aviation reauthorization bills. We endorse and will push hard for passage of a robust aviation reauthorization bill that fully funds the needs of the FAA, but we are concerned that the normal process of the Congress could delay final passage of the bill. Fortunately, there remains one solution that you could enact immediately that will go a long way towards ameliorating the pilot shortage while simultaneously saving the careers of our nation's most experienced pilots. *On behalf of the hundreds of US commercial pilots who are facing forced retirement upon their 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, we ask you to immediately grant age exemptions for those pilots who wish to continue to fly.*

By granting these exemptions, you will provide carriers with more pilots which could help reduce delays. You will also give many pilots who have seen their pensions destroyed by the legacy carriers an opportunity to work for a few more years to provide for their families. Most importantly, by granting these waivers you will allow our most experienced pilots to remain in the cockpit. As you noted in your January speech, the presence of those veteran pilots will enhance the safety of our nation's airline industry.

You have only weeks left in your term. Seize this day and make this change that will dramatically improve aviation safety.

Please move quickly to expedite an age change through the use of age exemptions.

Paul Emens, Chairman