

October 4, 2017

Dear Members of the Minnesota Congressional Delegation:



Aviation leaders in Minnesota are opposed to HR 2997. The Minnesota Aviation Trades Association, the Minnesota Business Aviation Association, the Minnesota Council of Airports, the Minnesota Pilots Association, and the Minnesota Seaplane Pilots Association, collectively represent a majority of the state's aviation community, collectively represent a majority of the state's aviation community, and we have joined with over 150 other aviation associations around the country to oppose HR 2997.



Recently, the three entities specifically created to provide Congress with non-partisan research and analyses have reviewed the air traffic control (ATC) privatization proposal backed by the major airlines. The Congressional Research Service said HR 2997 was "likely unconstitutional." The Congressional Budget Office said the bill would raise the deficit by \$100 billion. Finally the Government Accountability Office said privatization would interfere with ATC programs that have delivered \$2.7 billion in benefits to all users of the system and are on budget.



Since the introduction of HR 2997 in June, Captain Sully Sullenberger, the hero-pilot of the Miracle on the Hudson, publicly said the bill would devastate rural communities. Jim Lovell, the heroic commander of Apollo 13, and several other astronauts believe HR 2997 would turn the ATC system over to a private board unaccountable to Congress and could threaten our national security. The former Commanders of the U.S. Navy Blue Angels and U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds said the bill will "add billions to our nation's budget deficit, negatively impact our national security, and needlessly complicate border protection."



These highly respected voices of aviation are not only some of America's best pilots, they are some of America's best people. They have demonstrated their willingness to put the safety and security of others ahead of their own. Their positions on this issue aren't because of payment, promotions or politics. Rather, they studied the bill and came to these heartfelt and thoughtful conclusions on their own.



The American Conservative Union Foundation has called on Chairman Shuster to remove his bill from consideration because it does not meet their recognized principles. Concerns with the proposal have also been raised by the Americans for Tax Reform, the Citizens for Individual Freedom and the Institute for Liberty. These organizations don't want another Amtrak or Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, organizations that are largely unaccountable to Congress.

Passenger rights groups also strongly oppose HR 2997. Flyer's Rights, the National Consumer League, and In the Public Interest are among the well-established and authentic organizations that have written or testified in opposition to the bill.

In addition, over 100 business leaders from 50 states, including, Peter Burwell, Burwell Enterprises, President & CEO, Minneapolis, MN, and Evan Fagen, President & COO, Fagen Inc., Granite Falls, MN, most of whom are pilots,

have expressed their opposition to the ATC privatization proposal. These are successful business leaders who understand a profit and loss statement, as well as flight plans, and are responsible for a significant number of jobs and investment not only in Minnesota, but throughout the country.

Finally, a recent poll by CNBC found the majority of Americans oppose turning our ATC system over to a private not-for-profit entity. That is not surprising as no one would suggest turning our highway system over to the trucking companies.

For all the reasons set forth by respected government research organizations, aviation heroes, leading non-partisan consumer advocacy groups, passenger rights organizations, business leaders, the Minnesota aviation community, and a majority of Americans, we are asking you, as our elected representatives, to represent our views in Congress and vote no on HR 2997.

Sincerely,

Nancy Grazzini Olson

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Treasure, Minnesota Aviation Trades Association

Gordon Hoff

Gordon Hoff

Executive Director, Minnesota Business Aviation Association

Tom Werner

Tom Werner

Chair, Minnesota Council of Airports

Randy Corfman

Randy Corfman

President, Minnesota Pilots Association

Steve Guetter

Steve Guetter

President, Minnesota Seaplane Pilots Association