



PASS Applauds Introduction of Bill to Strengthen Aircraft Safety and Protect the Flying Public

The leader of the Professional Aviation Safety Specialists, AFL-CIO (PASS)—representing 11,000 Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) employees—today welcomed the introduction of the Safe Aircraft Maintenance Standards Act in the House of Representatives. The bill was introduced by Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.), chair of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. The bill would protect the country’s ability to inspect FAA-certificated foreign repair stations that service U.S.-based aircraft. “Aircraft maintenance should be held to the same standard whether an aircraft is inspected abroad or in the United States,” said PASS National President Mike Perrone. “The aviation safety inspectors we represent at the FAA are tasked with ensuring that all repair stations comply with U.S. safety regulations,” he continued. “However, the agency currently lacks the funding and personnel to adequately conduct robust inspections.”

The Safe Aircraft Maintenance Standards Act will allow the FAA to respond to the aviation industry’s growing reliance on outsourced maintenance work by ensuring that the inspection of FAA-certificated foreign repair stations is conducted as rigorously as their U.S. counterparts. Currently, domestic repair stations are subject to unannounced inspections by the FAA while foreign repair facilities often receive up to 60 days’ notice prior to an inspector’s arrival. This legislation targets that concerning gap in safety oversight. “They know we’re coming,” said Perrone. “Our inspectors are not confident with the level of oversight of these facilities and believe that serious safety issues may not be adequately addressed or may be covered up before the inspector arrives at the site.”

PASS [testified on this issue in July](#) at a congressional hearing on the “State of Aviation Safety,” noting that with announced visits, the foreign repair stations and their workers have the time to take necessary actions to regain compliance before the inspector arrives. “It is long past the time for this gap to be closed,” the union stated emphatically.

PASS, along with other transportation unions, has long argued that FAA-certificated foreign repair stations should be inspected at least once a year by an unannounced FAA inspector and all employees working on U.S. aircraft should be drug and alcohol tested to ensure that the work performed at these facilities meets FAA and air carrier standards.

“The employees we represent at the FAA undergo rigorous screening and are trained for months or even years before they are allowed to work on air traffic control systems or inspect aircraft,” said Perrone. “Why wouldn’t the agency want to insist that our high standards are matched overseas where safety critical functions are concerned?”

The union believes this legislation will enhance the largest, safest and most complex aviation system in the world and more importantly, protect the American flying public. PASS applauds Chairman DeFazio for his leadership on this critical safety issue and for garnering bipartisan support for the bill.