



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 11, 2007

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SWAPA Response to APA Advertisement on Age 60 Repeal

Shame on the Allied Pilots Association (APA) for manipulating data to scare the public.

Since last Thanksgiving, the international aviation community has adopted 65 as the new mandatory retirement age for commercial airline pilots. The US federal government as well as the aviation industry has slowly been working towards that goal and recently the House of Representatives passed legislation that would allow commercial pilots to fly until they are 65 instead of the being forced out of the cockpit at age 60. The Senate is expected to soon follow suit.

In a recent advertisement, APA tried to link a separate issue of pilot fatigue and duty time with the proposed change in pilot retirement age. If the issue of fatigue were such a significant issue at the APA (representing American Airlines pilots), one would think they would have brought the issue up to the Aviation Rulemaking Committee (ARC) that the FAA formed in 2006 to look into a rule change raising the pilot retirement age to 65. They never broached the issue.

Regrettably, in a last ditch effort to derail the legislation, the APA ran ads in USATODAY and other publications claiming that older pilots are more dangerous than younger pilots. Nothing could be further from the truth. Study after study and common sense proves that those pilots with the most experience are also the safest. And just about everyone in the aviation community is supporting the change including the Federal Aviation Administration, the Southwest Airlines Pilots Association, the Air Line Pilots Association, 312 Members of the House of Representatives and 50 Members of the Senate. Safety is paramount for each of these groups. The APA should be ashamed for using scare tactics in their effort to undermine the political process.

Capt. Carl Kuwitzky
President
Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association

Located in Dallas, the Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association (SWAPA) is a non-profit employee organization representing the more than 5,600 pilots of Southwest Airlines. SWAPA works to provide a secure and rewarding career for Southwest pilots and their families through contract negotiations, defending contractual rights, and actively promoting professionalism and safety. For more information on the Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association, visit www.swapa.org.

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