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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## SWAPA Applauds Congress for Securing National Airspace Safety and Strengthening Pilot Profession

(DALLAS) — Captain Jody Reven, President of the Southwest Airlines Pilots Association (SWAPA), issued the following statement today following the passage of H.R. 7148, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2026. This full-year appropriation provides critical funding for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and essential aviation safety initiatives while reinforcing the stability of the pilot profession.

"On behalf of the more than 11,000 pilots of Southwest Airlines, I want to thank Congress for passing a full-year budget that prioritizes the safety and integrity of our National Airspace System (NAS). For too long, our aviation infrastructure and the dedicated professionals who keep it running have been subjected to the uncertainty of short-term funding cycles and the threat of disruptive government shutdowns. Today's action provides the stability necessary to move forward with critical safety modernizations and workforce investments."

SWAPA is particularly pleased to see the inclusion of robust funding for **FAA Operations**, which includes not less than **\$1.84 billion for Aviation Safety** and over **\$10.3 billion for the Air Traffic Organization**. These funds are vital for modernizing our airspace while maintaining the rigorous oversight that makes American aviation the safest in the world.

Furthermore, this legislation takes direct aim at strengthening the pilot profession and the broader aviation workforce through:

- **Veterans' Pilot Training:** Funding the **veterans' pilot training program** is a significant step in helping former military members transition into commercial flight decks.
- **Aviation Workforce Development:** Providing **workforce grants**—including specific support for community college programs—ensures a robust pipeline of highly skilled pilots and maintenance technicians.
- **Pilot Health and Wellness:** By directing **\$100 million to the Office of Aerospace Medicine** and explicitly funding the **Human Intervention Motivation Study (HIMS)**,



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Congress is recognizing the essential need for comprehensive mental health and medical certification support for commercial pilots.

While we celebrate this progress, we must remain vigilant. The stability of our skies depends on every link in the safety chain. We urge Congress to ensure that future funding is never used as a political bargaining chip. Our **Air Traffic Controllers, TSA and CBP officers**, and other safety-critical government personnel must have the certainty of a paycheck to maintain the focus required for their important work.

National airspace stability is not a luxury; it is a necessity for the traveling public and the backbone of our economy. SWAPA remains committed to working with Congress and the FAA to implement these provisions and continue advocating for the highest standards of safety and professionalism in our industry.

### About SWAPA

Located in Dallas, Texas, the Southwest Airlines Pilots Association (SWAPA) is a non-profit employee organization representing the more than 11,000 pilots of Southwest Airlines. SWAPA works to provide a secure and rewarding career for Southwest pilots and their families through negotiating contracts, defending contractual rights, and actively promoting professionalism and safety. For more information on the Southwest Airlines Pilots Association, visit [www.swapa.org](http://www.swapa.org).