



U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

John L. Mica
Chairman

Washington, DC 20515

Nick J. Rahall, III
Ranking Member

James W. Coon II, Chief of Staff

December 19, 2012

James H. Zoia, Democrat Chief of Staff

The Honorable Michael P. Huerta
Acting Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20591

Dear Acting Administrator Huerta:

Congress enacted the Airline Safety and Federal Aviation Administration Extension Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-216), which I was proud to help author, with the expectation that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) would expeditiously comply with the bill's mandates for rulemaking to ensure that airline pilots have a proper level of experience and are qualified to work effectively as professional members of a well-functioning, highly-proficient crew. The crash of Colgan Air Flight 3407 near Buffalo, N.Y., in 2009 was a tragic indication of the need for updated requirements in these areas. Although I was pleased that the FAA published a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) in response to these mandates earlier this year,¹ a final rule in respect of one of the mandates referenced in the NPRM is now overdue, and a final rule satisfying the other mandate will be overdue in August 2013.²

I share your commitment to improving aviation safety, and I commend you and your predecessor for demonstrating that commitment in a number of safety-related initiatives over the past four years. In that spirit, the time has come for issuance of the strongest possible final rule on airline pilot certification and qualification requirements, in accordance with clear legislative mandates, and I respectfully urge the FAA to issue such a final rule as swiftly as possible. As you know, the best safety device in any cockpit is a well-trained crew. A final rule will provide certainty for pilots and airlines, improve safety, and save lives.

¹ *Pilot Certification and Qualification Requirements for Air Carrier Operations*, 77 Fed. Reg. 12,374 (Feb. 29, 2012).

² Airline Safety and Federal Aviation Administration Extension Act of 2010, Pub. L. No. 111-216, §§ 216(b)(2), 217(f) (2010).

The Hon. Michael P. Huerta
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jerry F. Costello". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "C".

JERRY F. COSTELLO
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Aviation