



PASS Troubled by House Committee Vote on Privatization

Mike Perrone, national president of the Professional Aviation Safety Specialists, AFL-CIO (PASS), issued the following statement on the outcome of Tuesday's vote in the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee on Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization legislation. PASS represents 11,000 employees at the FAA.

The bill, the 21st Century AIRR Act, calls for privatizing the nation's air traffic control system, a misguided scheme that PASS strongly opposes. The bill passed largely along party lines, 32 to 25, with one Republican lawmaker siding with his Democratic colleagues.

"Yesterday's markup reinforced what PASS and other unions have been saying about privatization for years," said Perrone. "As lawmakers rejected amendments to increase accountability to the flying public, cap CEO salaries and mitigate financial conflicts of interest, it became clear that the safety of the system and the employees who maintain it would take a backseat to profits in a privatized system. This is not a fight that will be given up easily by PASS, other organizations or lawmakers committed to ensuring the U.S. air traffic control system stays a function of the federal government.

"We watched the Committee reject a commonsense amendment that would have set a pay floor and staffing minimums for the privatized employees taken out of the federal government. This only highlights our concern that privatizing air traffic control will shortchange the men and women of the FAA and jeopardize the safety of the American public."

Reducing the size of the federal government is a hallmark of the Trump administration's plan to remake government, but even one of his supporters on the committee could not get behind the plan to move more than 30,000 workers out of federal service and into a new, not-for-profit corporation. This privatization scheme is nothing more than a thinly veiled attempt to reduce the size of the federal workforce that gives away a national treasure to a board of special interests.

"We believe that our National Airspace System is a complex entity that works for all users of the system today because of its public structure and accountability to Congress and the American people," continued Perrone.

PASS vows to continue to oppose these efforts to privatize the air traffic control system and to protect the dedicated and highly skilled men and women at the FAA who maintain it. Every day, the FAA is making great strides in its push to modernize the system through the Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen) program. That progress would come to a halt during the transition if the air traffic control system were privatized.

"Severing air traffic control from the federal government is an unnecessary undertaking for a system that is not broken," said Perrone. "We need to work together to secure our standing as the world leader in aviation."



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For more information or questions, please contact Liz Doherty.

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