



South Carolina Members Fight Privatization

Across the country, PASS members are stepping up their efforts to tell their members of Congress that privatization of the air traffic control system is a bad idea. Site visits and meetings with members of Congress or their staffers are excellent ways to convey this message. This month, Chapter SC3 President Brian Strickland and Vice President David Brown took the opportunity to discuss this important issue with lawmakers.

Strickland invited Kelly Long, a staffer for Sen. Tim Scott (R-S.C.) to visit the South Carolina District Office System Support Center (CAE SSC) to talk about PASS's priorities and give him a tour of the facility. "He asked a lot of questions and genuinely listened to what we had to say," said Strickland. "He said that he would brief the senator directly on our issues and concerns." Long also asked if he could return the following week with his children to receive a tour of the facility, and PASS members were able to arrange that for him. Brown also was able to organize a tour of the local fixed-base operator (FBO) at Eagle Aviation. "It was a great visit and we made a good impression on behalf of PASS," said Strickland.

Of course, the primary purpose of the visit was to convey the importance of supporting the Senate version of the FAA reauthorization bill (S.2658) and oppose privatization of the air traffic control system. "We asked Mr. Long to encourage Senator Scott to support the Senate version of the FAA reauthorization bill," said Strickland. "We plan on staying engaged. We let them know that the majority of our employees are veterans and that they were fearful of losing their jobs. We also let them know of the economic impacts on the state if privatization was successful." Strickland has since learned that Long briefed the senator's executive director on PASS's issues, and that the senator was briefed directly shortly thereafter.

In addition, Strickland and Brown visited with Yvette Rowland, a staffer for Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.). The staffer spent an impressive five hours with the PASS members. "She was very impressed and asked many questions about what we do," said Strickland. "She informed us that Senator Graham is staunchly against privatization of the FAA."

The pair also met with Alex Morris, a staffer from the office of Rep. Joe Wilson (R-S.C.). They took the chance to explain the perils of privatization, loss of jobs, negative impact on the state's economy, possibility of loss of commercial services and potential impact on aviation safety. Strickland said it was a good visit and they will continue to follow up.

Strickland says he is working to arrange for other PASS members across the state to meet with their members of Congress. PASS thanks the South Carolina team for their excellent efforts and dedication to getting out the PASS message!



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Pictured:

Chapter SC3 President Brian Strickland and Kelly Long, staffer for Sen. Tim Scott (R-S.C.).

Chapter SC3 Vice President David Brown and Kelly Long, staffer for Sen. Tim Scott (R-S.C.).