Foreign Repair Station Bill Passes

Last week, the House passed H.R. 7321, the Global Aircraft Maintenance Safety Improvement Act on a bipartisan 374 – 52 vote. The legislation removes incentives for airlines to offshore maintenance jobs by closing safety loopholes that allow U.S.-aircraft to be repaired on lower safety standards at FAA-certified facilities abroad. PASS has long been an advocate for tightening the safety inequities at foreign repair stations. “This legislation is an important step in the right direction,” said National President Dave Spero. “We will work with members of Congress to ensure its passage.” The FAA no longer has international field offices overseas and any inspections of foreign facilities require advanced notice and State Department approval, as noted by PASS at a June 2019 outsourcing summit. "They know we are coming," said then PASS President Mike Perrone. Over the years, the FAA has allowed regulatory gaps to occur in five areas, defining different standards for maintenance performed abroad versus maintenance performed in the United States.

Unlike domestic facilities, FAA-certified repair facilities abroad are **NOT** required to:

- Conduct drug and alcohol testing on safety-sensitive personnel;
- Perform background checks on workers;
- Assess security threats for facilities;
- Allow unannounced FAA inspections of maintenance operations; and
- Meet minimum qualifications for aircraft mechanics.

H.R. 7321 would establish one uniform level of safety for aircraft repair, maintenance and overhaul regardless of where the service is performed. The bill next goes to the Senate for consideration.