

RAISE THE RETIREMENT AGE FOR AIRLINE PILOTS - THE TIME IS NOW

An Immediate Solution to an Immediate Problem - Raising the Airline Pilot Retirement Age to 67 brings immediate benefits to a beleaguered airline system

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, July 5, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- For Immediate Release

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Raise the Pilot Age - Let Experienced Pilots Fly

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An Immediate Solution to an Immediate Problem

July 4, 2023 - Americans want and deserve the safest, most affordable, and convenient air travel possible. It can be done by including one key provision in the FAA Reauthorization Bill now moving through Congress.

By RAISING THE AIRLINE PILOT RETIREMENT AGE to 67 there are three immediate benefits to a beleaguered system:

- More pilots available to fly IMMEDIATELY – fewer cancelled flights due to crew timeouts.
- More experienced pilots in the cockpit – safety & training benefits for less experienced first officers.
- Regional airports will have flights restored – [travel becomes more convenient](#) with more consumer choice. Consumers will see greater options in tickets and pricing – improved competition.

Let Experienced Pilots Fly is an organization of thousands of experienced airline pilots who came together to change the archaic and discriminatory law that forces commercial pilots out of the cockpit at 65 years of age. In addition to advocating for this long overdue change with Congress (this is the first time in 16 years the issue has been addressed), the effort is also facing a dearth of misinformation being shared by the very unions to which coalition members pay dues. The

same unions that have failed to fairly represent the coalition of pilots and their interests.

On behalf of the Let Experienced Pilots Fly coalition here are some facts that support raising the forced retirement age of America's most experienced airline pilots:

□ [The pilot shortage is real](#) and getting worse. Thousands of pilots are being forced into retirement every year. The shortage has not "peaked" yet according to real experts.

□ As the peak air travel season progresses (July 4th – New Year's) "meltdowns" in air travel worsen. The pilot shortage exacerbates the weather or system failures. How?

o Crews "time out" – and with fewer pilots in backup ("reserve") those passengers are left to figure out how to continue their trips.

o All the reparations or compensation the flying public receives does not begin to address the inconveniences or disruptions in business activity, or the financial/emotional impact for a family that saves up to take a trip and then gets delayed or stranded because of a cancelled flight. Missed cruises; missed planned tours; loss of hotels; etc.

□ Raising the pilot retirement age to 67 provides IMMEDIATE RELIEF to a stressed system for several key reasons:

o It is immediate. There are literally thousands of trained, tested, and certified pilots who can fly domestic routes right away, with little or no re-training. Right away.

o It is safe. No profession assesses for skill, proficiency, and healthfulness more than pilots are tested.

o It more closely aligns commercial air travel with air charters and corporate pilots. Many pilots who are forced to retire from commercial flying are in another cockpit the very next day. This time they are flying for the wealthy – as the forced retirement age for charter and private pilots is higher than for commercial air travel. (Part 121 vs Part 135)

o It helps airlines perform better. Experience Matters. There are good proposals to get new recruits into the training pipeline. But that process should not be rushed, and our rigorous standards for training and recruitment do not have to be compromised in order to cultivate the next generation of aviators.

□ More is known today than ever before about pilot health and safety.

o America's experts on aging and health have endorsed raising the retirement age for airline pilots.

o There is now a better understanding of pilot incapacitations (no correlation to chronological age); associated risks; detection and treatment of health conditions; and our ability to return a pilot to service or relieve them of duty.

o One's ability to fly should be based on testing and assessments, not an arbitrary number.

o Benefits to the American public. More experienced pilots are better for air safety. Lower time/less experienced pilots pose a greater safety hazard.

□ Raising the airline pilot age in the US, to 67, aligns us with at least nine other countries and affords the US extraordinary opportunities in aviation leadership.

- o Economic benefits. The regional airports are being decimated by the loss of air service, causing less choice for travelers while increasing the cost of tickets. People must travel greater distances to fly and have fewer options. All the ancillary businesses that thriving airports once utilized are losing money. In 2007, when the pilot age was last raised, the next GAO report (2009) estimated the net gain to the American economy at 334M.
- o International Air Treaties and Bilateral Agreements: The International Air Transport Association (IATA) represents more than 280 airlines. They have requested that the International Coalition of Airline Organizations (ICAO), the UN based organization that aligns all air treaties and agreements, raise age limits for pilots.
- o Leadership in research and policy making: By raising the pilot retirement age to 67, America resumes international leadership, joining those countries that have already experienced the benefits in both aviation safety and helping their countries' economies through expanded air travel availability and competitiveness because of a higher retirement age.

On behalf of the thousands of airline pilots who support this effort, Americans are encouraged to let their federal elected officials know that it is time to RAISE THE PILOT AGE and LET EXPERIENCED PILOTS FLY. The FAA Reauthorization Bill, now working its way through committees, must be completed before September 30th. The language allowing airline pilots to fly to age 67 needs to be included in this legislation.

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Raisethepilotage.com

<https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-14-232.pdf>

<https://www.oliverwyman.com/our-expertise/insights/2021/mar/after-covid-19-aviation-faces-a-pilot-shortage.html>

<https://www.airlines.org/dataset/u-s-passenger-carrier-delay-costs/>

<https://aviationmetric.com/flight-delays-cost-more-than-just-time-airlines-reputation-at-stake>

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/02/25/2020-01111/pilots-professional-development>

<https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-14-232.pdf>

<https://aviationmetric.com/commercial-private-airlines-compete-for-dwindling-pool-of-pilots/>

<https://www.eeoc.gov/foia/eeoc-informal-discussion-letter-150> - Age 65 discussion (2006) clearly stating that this was intended as an interim step to eliminating an upper age limit for commercial pilots, with individual testing as the primary determinant.

AARP Support Letter

Cardiologist Support Letter

<https://www.aviationpros.com/airlines/press-release/21286795/raa-newly-released-data-shows-air-service-crisis>

<https://portal.staralliance.com/cms/news/hot-topics/2022-08-15/general/iata-to-press-for-icao-review-of-pilot-upper-age-limits>

<https://www.raa.org/raisetheage/>

NOTE: Our opposition includes the unions to which we all belong, pay dues, and have supported for many years. Their claims of older pilots being unfit due to age is an insult and defies their mandate to fairly represent all members, and refrain from discriminatory practices. They also reference information claiming it to be data or “studies” when in fact the information is not. We encourage all those who are engaged in this effort to check facts, cite legitimate sources and refrain from the unprofessional and inappropriate conduct that promotes ageist practices and denigrates any class of employees or professionals. This is about the safety of the flying public; the right of any qualified individual to work; and restoring legitimate supply chain resources and market competitiveness in the airline industry.

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