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February 3, 2010

Dear Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica:

In advance of your hearing tomorrow, I wanted to assure you that we have already begun a detailed review of the findings and recommendations that came out of the NTSB's very thorough inspection and hearing of yesterday.

As part of our commitment to a safety culture, our Safety Task Force will examine these recommendations in earnest. However, please be assured that not only do our member airlines support these findings, they began adopting many of these safety enhancements well before yesterday's NTSB's recommendations. For example, as part of RAA's Strategic Safety Initiative:

- RAA called for a single, accessible database of ALL pilot training records, so that airlines could have more complete information about an applicant's skills and qualifications prior to bringing that person into the airline's system. While as an interim step, RAA and FAA have jointly developed a process to reduce the time that RAA member airlines obtain Notices of Disapproval, the goal must remain the PRIA standard of four business days.
- While fatigue was not cited as a cause by the NTSB in this accident, fatigue erodes the margin of safety. RAA has undertaken a pioneering study of fatigue in multi-leg flight operations – a study whose results will be used to help identify, mitigate and most importantly, help eliminate fatigue. Most importantly, what we learn will become part of an industry-leading fatigue training program for pilots and airline managers.
- RAA and our member airline training professionals have begun reviews with FAA of flight training protocols, with specific focus on the most advanced and effective stall training procedures.

We and you – along with the FAA and the NTSB – share a common mission, the relentless pursuit of the safest skies attainable, and we look forward to participating in all forums advancing the safety agenda, including the planned symposiums on professionalism and airline code-sharing. We will continue to study and act on the NTSB recommendations, and work with Congress and FAA on all fronts, but we want to be clear: the regional airlines will move ahead to ensure that air travel continues to be the safest form of transportation in the world.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger Cohen", written in a cursive style.

Roger Cohen

Safe. Professional. Reliable