April 23, 2018

The Honorable Pete Sessions
Chairman
The Committee on Rules
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable James McGovern
Ranking Member
The Committee on Rules
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Sessions and Ranking Member McGovern:

We are writing to oppose Amendment 151, filed by Reps. Collins (R-NY) and others, which would prevent modification of the Pilot Certification and Qualification Requirements for Air Carrier Operations Rule unless otherwise altered by Congress. This proposed amendment to H.R. 4, the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018, is an overreach that undermines the FAA’s authority as the industry’s safety regulator.

If the proposed amendment was implemented, the FAA would need to await Congressional direction before acting on any pilot training issue, thereby constraining the Agency’s ability to respond in real-time to identified risk in the system. The amendment would also preclude the FAA from making continuous progressive and evolutionary safety enhancements to pilot training that are needed to keep our country on the leading edge of aviation safety.

It is important to note that the Flight Safety Foundation --- an independent, impartial, international non-profit organization that exists to champion the cause of aviation safety --- recently published a position paper, Pilot Training and Competency, and stated, “… the industry has reached a crossroads in determining how pilots need to be selected, hired, trained and mentored ...changes need to be made if the industry is to continue its stellar safety performance in an era of expected rapid growth in many regions of the world.”

Our country’s pilot workforce is currently going through a period of unprecedented change. In the United States alone, the aviation industry will need tens of thousands of new pilots to maintain current levels of service and meet the public’s growing need for air travel. During this period of incredible transition, the FAA must have the ability and flexibility to ensure that aspiring pilots are well trained and proficient, and that the highest level of safety is maintained.

If this proposed amendment is adopted, it would effectively codify complacency in pilot training and qualification standards. We urge you to oppose this amendment.
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Faye Malarkey Black, President
Regional Airline Association

Todd Hauptli, President and CEO
American Association of Airport Executives

Sharon Pinkerton, Senior Vice President
Airlines for America

Douglas E. Lavin, Vice President,
Member and External Relations
International Air Transport Association

Matthew S. Zuccaro, President & CEO
Helicopter Association International

Mark S. Kimberling, President and CEO
National Association of State Aviation Officials

Stephen Alterman, President
Cargo Airline Association

Martin H. Hiller, President
National Air Transportation Association

A. Oakley Brooks, President
National Air Carrier Association

Stan Bernstein, President
Regional Air Cargo Carrier Association

cc: House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI)
    House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA)
    House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA)
    House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer (D-MD)
    House T&I Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA)
    House T&I Ranking Member Peter Defazio (D-OR)
    House T&I Aviation Subcmte Chairman Frank LoBiondo (R-NJ)
    House T&I Aviation Subcmte Ranking Member Rick Larsen (D-WA)