

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

September 25, 2025

The Honorable Bryan Bedford
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Ave SW
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Administrator Bedford,

We write with concerns following recent reports of increased incidences of oil and hydraulic fluid fumes in the cabin and flight deck (fume events) on U.S. commercial aircraft.¹ We are deeply concerned about the health risks and potential for compromised flight safety this exposure presents to our constituents, who you are responsible for protecting, and urge you to expeditiously implement the requirements laid out in the 2024 Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization law to ensure the safety of the flying public.

As you know, nearly all commercial aircraft ventilation air supplied to the cabin and flight deck is first compressed either in the main aircraft engines or a small auxiliary engine in the tail. “Bleed air” comprises the majority of the air on most flights, the remaining portion having been recirculated throughout the aircraft. This “bleed air” design has dominated all aircraft markets since the early 1950s, and while aircraft have seals to prevent oils from leaching into the air bound for the cabin, these seals can wear and degrade allowing oil to be vaporized and releasing unknown quantities of contaminants into the air that passengers and crew members inhale.

Recent reporting has indicated an uptick in fume events reported by flight crew members in the last year, though this issue has existed for decades.² While this may be due in part to the recent change in guidance for airlines reporting fume events, there has been a stark increase over the last decade, with thousands of events reported to the FAA since 2010.³

Furthermore, reports indicate that multiple airline crew members have been forced to leave their jobs as pilots and flight attendants following fume events where their exposure led to injuries; one doctor even noted that “matched the symmetrical injuries seen in soldiers exposed to

¹ Benjamin Katz, John West, and Andrew Tangel, *Toxic Fumes Are Leaking Into Airplanes, Sickening Crews and Passengers*, Wall Street Journal, (Sept. 13, 2025), available at: <https://www.wsj.com/business/airlines/air-travel-toxic-fumes>

² *Id.*

³ Suzanne Rowan Kelleher, *FAA And Airlines Slow To Address Toxic Jet Fume Events On Planes*, Forbes, (Sept. 15, 2025), available at: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/suzannerowankelleher/2025/09/15/faa-airlines-toxic-jet-fume-events/>

chemicals in combat.”⁴ This is also not a new phenomenon, with flight crew reporting injuries from these fume events for decades.

The 2024 FAA Reauthorization required the FAA to develop a standardized submission system for air carrier employees to voluntarily report fume or smoke events onboard passenger-carrying aircraft.⁵ This reporting system is required to, among others, include the type of aircraft, the intensity of the fumes or smoke, the duration of the fume or smoke event, and any required onboard medical attention for passengers or crew members. The law also requires the National Academies to issue recommendations on improving overall cabin air quality; as well as allows the FAA to issue rulemaking regarding training for flight and ground crew members, **installation of onboard detectors, and airlines’ response to fume and smoke events.**

In light of recent reporting and investigations that show the extent of these events and the serious health impacts they can cause, we urge you to expeditiously complete the work of standing up this required reporting system and request an update on the implementation timeline. We also request that you take steps to create a similar reporting system for passengers to report fume or smoke events they experience to ensure that all concerning events are captured.

Fume and smoke incidents on commercial aircraft, the leading source of which being from oil and hydraulic fluid, are serious events with the potential for lasting consequences. It is vital that the FAA continue its strong oversight of aircraft to ensure crew member and passenger safety – this includes ensuring fume and smoke events are properly reported, investigated, and prevented. We welcome the opportunity to partner to keep our skies safe. We look forward to your prompt response.

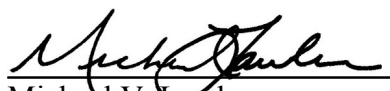
Sincerely,



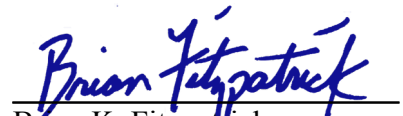
Chris Pappas
Member of Congress



Greg Stanton
Member of Congress



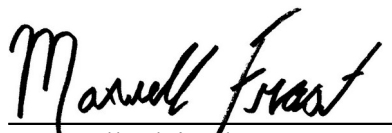
Michael V. Lawler
Member of Congress



Brian K. Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress

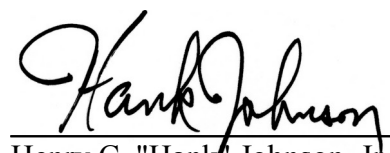
⁴ *Supra* at 1.

⁵ *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024*, Pub. L. No. 118-63.

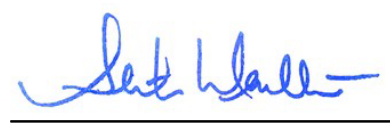

Maxwell Alejandro Frost
Member of Congress

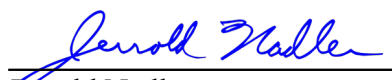

John Garamendi
Member of Congress

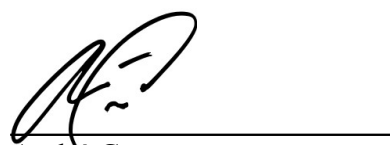

Maggie Goodlander
Member of Congress


Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress

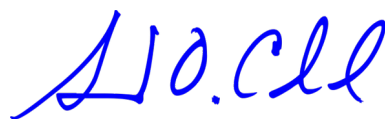

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

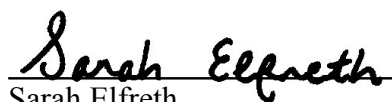

Seth Moulton
Member of Congress


Jerrold Nadler
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André Carson
Member of Congress


Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress

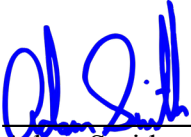

Salud Carbajal
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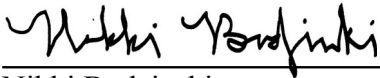

Bill Foster
Member of Congress



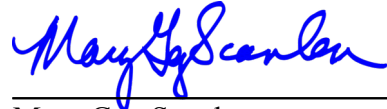
Adam Smith
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Mark DeSaulnier
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Nikki Budzinski
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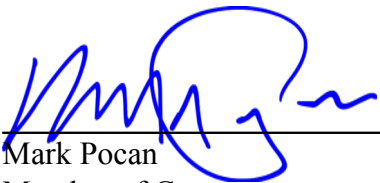
Mary Gay Scanlon
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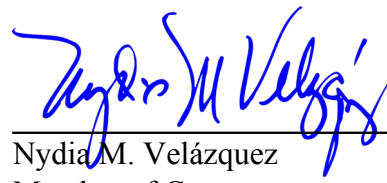
Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress



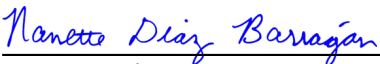
Nellie Pou
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Mark Pocan
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Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



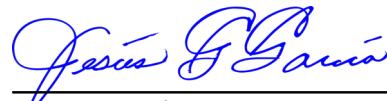
Nanette Diaz Barragán
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Bonnie Watson Coleman
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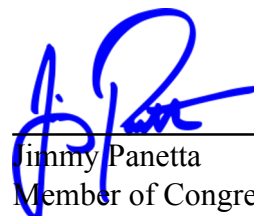
Betty McCollum
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Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



Chris Deluzio
Member of Congress



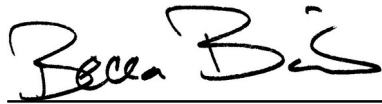
Valerie P. Foushee
Member of Congress



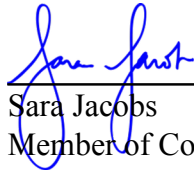
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Val Hoyle
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Becca Balint
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Sara Jacobs
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Jared Moskowitz
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