

Regional Airlines Pushing for Safety Rollbacks in FAA Bill

Buffalo, New York - June 28, 2017 - As amendments were filed on both sides of the Hill seeking to water down the hard-fought, stronger regional airline pilot qualification requirements won by safety advocates in the wake of the crash of Continental Flight 3407, over twenty-five members of the 'Families of Continental Flight 3407' descended upon Washington to stand up for safety. The families' charge was led by 10-year-old Summer West of Clarence, New York, who lost her father and Northrup Grumman defense contractor Ernie West in the crash when she was only two, who read a passionate letter to all members of Congress at the group's press conference (Youtube link to her speech, starting at 1:50: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-d5TT2mPWGk&t=110s>)

"I couldn't protect my daddy that night," stated Summer as she brought many in the room to tears. "But I can protect other daddies now."

The family group received good news later in the day as Rep. Sam Graves of Missouri withdrew his proposed amendment at a House mark-up session, that sought to create loopholes in the stronger entry-level experience requirements for regional airline first officers enacted by the Federal Aviation Administration back in 2013 after being unanimously passed by both Houses of Congress in 2010.

"It felt good to do something to honor my dad and make sure that the skies are safe for everyone," added Summer. "It was cool to share my letters with the people in Congress. I got a coin from Mr. Reed, got to talk to Mr. LoBiondo up on the big stage, and Mr. Bost liked my letter so much that he shared it with Mr. Davis. I know they are daddies too, so hopefully they do the right thing for all the moms and dads and sons and daughters who get on a plane. I can't wait to go back to Washington again."