

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 19, 2011

The Honorable Jacob J. Lew
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Lew:

We write to express our concern and disappointment that the flight and duty time regulation deadline required by PL 111-216, the *Airline Safety and Federal Aviation Extension Act* was missed, and that the projected publication date listed in the DOT Significant Rulemakings Quarterly Report is not until November 22. We respectfully request the reason for this delay and urge you to expeditiously move forward with strong science-based flight and duty time regulations to combat pilot fatigue.

Reducing pilot fatigue has been on the National Transportation Safety Board's Most Wanted List for over 20 years. During this time, pilot fatigue has played a serious role in a number of airline crashes, including the February 2009 crash of Continental Flight 3407 in Western New York – the area which we represent in the House of Representatives. In the case of Flight 3407, neither the flight captain nor the copilot had a full night of bed rest the night before the crash; with the flight captain sleeping in the airport crew lounge and the co-captain taking an overnight cross-country flight.

We know from these needless tragedies that the decades old system in place does not adequately address the risk of fatigue nor sufficiently protect the traveling public. We urge you to quickly finalize the pilot and duty time regulations and resist any efforts to weaken strong science-based regulations that end dangerous pilot scheduling practices and ensure that pilots are well-rested and ready to perform their duties. With each delay, the flying public continues to take to the skies bearing unnecessary risks.

Thank you for your attention to this important request. We appreciate your commitment to improving air safety and look forward to working with you to ensure one level of safety.

Sincerely,


Rep. Brian Higgins
Member of Congress


Rep. Louise McIntosh Slaughter
Member of Congress


Rep. Kathleen C. Hochul
Member of Congress