

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS

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Congressman James L. Oberstar
2365 Rayburn HOB
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Congressman Oberstar,

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters Airline Division—representing more than 64,000 airline employees—has great concern over Congress's failure to provide for continuous pilot vision when unstoppable blinding smoke invades the cockpit on airliners.

Airliners are not certified for continuous blinding smoke but only a finite amount of smoke for a short three minutes. As a result, there have been numerous accidents in the past that resulted from continuous unstoppable smoke in the cockpit. Fixing this unaddressed safety issue has a collateral benefit of addressing a security issue as well.

Not commonly known is that damage inflicted by a small bomb may not cause an aircraft to crash but is known to generate enough smoke to blind pilots and prevent them from seeing their instruments and out the window in order to fly and land the airplane. If the airplane remains flyable, then the blinding smoke becomes a safety issue. An inability to see due to unstoppable smoke will result in the crash of a flyable aircraft due to blinding smoke.

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters Airline Division takes the position that since the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Federal Aviation Administration have equipped their aircraft with technology to permit their pilots to see in a cockpit filled with continuous unstoppable smoke, the public and airline crews deserve the same degree of safety.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Bourne", is written over a horizontal line.

David Bourne, Director
Teamsters Airline Division