

that this program needs to allow all pilots to volunteer for this critical program.

Second, the amendment would require the Transportation Security Administration to begin training qualified volunteer pilots more quickly. Very simply, the sooner that there are armed pilots in the cockpit, the quicker they can respond to potential and future in-flight attacks.

Lastly, the amendment would eliminate the sunset for the Federal flight deck officer program included in the bill and make it permanent. Mr. Chairman, I believe the need for this important program does not go away after 2 years.

Mr. Chairman, by arming pilots, Congress can create a last line of defense against terrorist attacks. It is critical that we take every possible action to protect passengers in this country and the aviation system, and this legislation is an important component of that process.

Since September 11, we have learned that we need to prepare for previously unthinkable acts of terror. This commonsense legislation and this common-sense amendment gives airlines and pilots an additional tool and creates the last line of defense against future attacks.

Mr. Chairman, this is a voluntary program. This is a program that pilots can choose to participate in. It is something that the pilots of this country have asked for, and I would dare say that anybody who uses the aviation system in this country and flies on a regular basis, there is no person that we put more trust and more confidence in than the person who is piloting that airplane. From the takeoff to the flight and the many miles in between and to the landing, it is important that we support our pilots in what they are asking for, and also what I believe the majority of the people in the country are asking for, and that is providing the last line of defense, giving those pilots, those people that we entrust our lives to on a daily basis, an opportunity if it presents itself to be saved from an airplane having to be shot down or, worse yet, although there is not anything worse yet, but having been shot down or having to experience what we saw on September 11.

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So it is critically important, I believe, Mr. Chairman, that this amendment be added to this important legislation; that we strengthen it, that we put in place a provision that does not limit or in any way put a ceiling on the number of pilots who can participate in this program. It is a voluntary program.

I ask that we expedite and accelerate the training process, and finally, that we eliminate the sunset provisions so this program can continue long after the 2 years has expired. I believe it will have a deterrent effect and it will send a very, very strong message to the ter-

rorists around the world who would commit acts of terrorism against the people of this country that they are going to be dealing with a system that is completely armed and ready to deal with any type of terrorist attack.

So I ask my colleagues here to support this amendment to make this legislation stronger, and then to move it out of this Chamber and hopefully on the President's desk, and to get a signature so we can begin to implement these provisions.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

First of all, I want to thank the gentleman from Alaska (Chairman YOUNG) and the gentleman from Florida (Chairman MICA) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) for their hard work and cooperation in developing this compromise, and I want to stress, compromise legislation. There are many tough decisions that had to be made by members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

The terrible acts of September 11 changed our perspective on how we protect our air passengers and citizens. The traveling public wants and deserves to be safe while traveling. In my home State of Florida, we rely heavily on tourists as the base of our economy, and we need to ensure for people that it is safe to fly.

Arming our pilots is a monumental action by this Congress, and it is a perfect example of why it is so important for us to decide policy through thoughtful deliberation and debate. We are beginning to undertake one of the most significant changes in our Nation's government. As we begin to develop the Department of Homeland Security, we should not be concerned about when we get it done; we should be concerned about whether this new agency is going to serve the best interests of the American public.

We have seen too many examples where the TSA has lacked communication with the local government or the airports, and it is very important that we have communications working with the local governments as far as this new agency is concerned.

The high percentage of missed weapons in the recent TSA undercover operation shows us how much we need to improve passenger safety programs. Arming pilots is one small step, but we still have a lot of work to do. I look forward to working with my colleagues on the committee, as well as DOT and the airline industry, in striving to provide the safest and most efficient air transportation system for the traveling public.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

(Mr. PAUL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the amendment, but I would like to mention that this is essentially the same amendment that I had prepared to offer, an amendment that I put into the RECORD 2 days ago. But I will support this amendment because it is essentially doing what I was anxious to do.

Shortly after 9-11, as a matter of fact, on September 17, I introduced legislation into this body, H.R. 2896. It would have taken care of this problem in a more conclusive way, and it would have removed all the prohibitions and legalized, once again, the right of property owners to defend their property.

Of course, that would be the ultimate solution, as far as I am concerned, because we are moving in a direction, unfortunately, towards more dependence on government and government regulation, and government programs that allow weapons in a cockpit.

An example I like to use, which I think is an accurate example, if we look at the inner cities, guns are denied to the citizens. There are a lot of police and there is a lot of crime. If we look to the suburbs and the rural areas, there are essentially no police, there are a lot of guns in the homes, and there are essentially no crimes.

That principle should be applied to the airlines. It should be applied because guns can prevent crime, and we should allow them to be placed in the hands of the owners. I have a tie that is a favorite tie of mine, and it has a picture of the Bill of Rights, but it has a stamp over it which says, "void where prohibited by law." I think we do too much of that around here.

A lot of times I get support from the other side of the aisle when they see the prohibitions that our legislation places on the First Amendment. Likewise, I get a lot of support when I would like to reduce the prohibitions on the Fourth Amendment in the area of privacy. Unfortunately, since 9-11, we have moved in the wrong direction. We are making more prohibitions by law on our Bill of Rights.

In this case we are moving in the right direction because we are trying to remove some prohibitions that are limiting our Second Amendment rights. Our job here in the Congress should be to protect the Second Amendment, never to get in the way of the Second Amendment. This is why, although this amendment improves the bill and the bill is moving in that direction, I can support it, but we ought to do a lot more.

Another example of how private property could work was the recent example at LAX Airport. Private owners of an airline assumed responsibility for security at the gate. Many lives were probably saved with El Al guards, private guards with private weapons, that tragically are denied to American airlines. Because of an agreement between one foreign airline and the U.S. Department of Transportation, it has been

given permission to protect their people better than we are allowed to protect ourselves. That to me just seems downright foolish, and I think we in the Congress should demand our rights of the Second Amendment and insist on the responsibility of property owners to protect their property and to protect our lives.

We are moving in that direction, and El Al deserves definite compliments, but we deserve deep scrutiny. Why do we permit a foreign airline to provide more security for their people than we are allowed in our country?

The best step in the world, of course, would be to pass my bill, H.R. 2896, which would just legalize once again the Second Amendment and allow our airlines to make the decision, and let the people decide. The airlines that say, we have guns in the cockpit, I would go fly that airline; if they say no, we do not believe in guns, let it be.

We need to, once again, believe in America, believe in freedom, believe in the Bill of Rights, and let the people take care of so many of these problems instead of getting in the way. This bill, fortunately, is helping to get the government out of the way. That is why I support it.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

(Mr. BARTON of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I want to commend the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for bringing this bill to the floor. I want to commend the ranking member, the full committee chairman, the ranking subcommittee member, and the subcommittee chairman for this. It is an excellent piece of legislation, but, like most bills, it can be improved.

The district that I represent down in Texas includes D-FW airport, which is one of the hub airports in our great Nation. I am very close to Love Field, which is the hub airport for Southwest Airlines. I could be proven wrong on this, but I guess my estimate is that there are more pilots who live in my congressional district than any other district in the country.

As soon as we had the terrible tragedy back in September, my pilots began to come to me personally and collectively and in town meetings saying that they would like to have the right to carry a firearm in the cockpit. I support that right. It is guaranteed under the Constitution, the Second Amendment. We have had several pieces of legislation that have passed since September 11, and there have been numerous ways to try to give that right to the pilots.

The underlying bill before us would allow that in a limited fashion. The amendment that is sponsored by the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO), myself, the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), and the gentleman

from Washington (Mr. NETHERCUTT) would remove that 2 percent cap, it would make the program permanent, and it would accelerate the training of qualified pilots.

I would like to point out that this is a voluntary program. We are not forcing a pilot to carry a weapon if he or she feels that they do not need to or do not want to. The pilots have to be trained. The pilots have to be certified. But as someone who has flown over 3 million miles, air miles on commercial airliners since I became a United States Representative in 1985, I can tell Members that as a passenger, I feel more comfortable if I know that the pilots at a minimum have the right to carry a weapon, and hopefully, are carrying that weapon and exercising that right. It makes the terrorists' job that much more difficult, should they in some way gain entry into the airplane or into the cockpit.

Most of our pilots are former military flyers, so they are very comfortable with firearms. Again, they have to be trained.

I think this is an excellent amendment. I would point out that a survey that was done back in October by the Air Line Pilots Association and by United Seniors Association, USA, this was done by the Winston Group in October of 2001, shows that 75 percent of Americans favor arming airline pilots, and 49 percent say they would switch to an airline that allows its pilots to be armed. More than half said they would be willing to pay extra to fly on a plane where they knew the pilot had a firearm.

Interestingly enough, 78 percent of married women with children would support arming our pilots, and 77 percent of adults over 55.

So at least in this survey taken last fall, there was overwhelming support. I believe, if this amendment comes to a roll call vote, we will see overwhelming support on the House floor.

I want to commend the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE), the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO), and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NETHERCUTT) for working with me to bring forth this amendment, and I hope we adopt it expeditiously.

Mr. Chairman, I include for the RECORD information on the survey I referred to earlier.

The document referred to is as follows:

ALLIED PILOTS ASSOCIATION, UNITED
SENIORS ASSOCIATION,
October 17, 2001.

NEW NATIONAL SURVEY SHOWS OVERWHELMING PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR ARMING AIRLINE PILOTS

SUPPORT STRONGEST AMONG WOMEN, SENIORS; TRAVELERS WOULD SWITCH TO AIRLINES THAT ARM ITS PILOTS

WASHINGTON, DC.—A new national survey commissioned by the Allied Pilots Association and United Seniors Association and conducted by The Winston Group, will be released today, Wednesday, October 17, 2001. The survey reveals the biggest concerns of airline passengers and what security meas-

ures the government needs to take now to reassure the traveling public that it is again safe to fly.

75% of Americans favor arming airline pilots.

49% of those surveyed would switch to an airline that armed its pilots.

More than half (51%) would be willing to pay up to \$25 per ticket to pay for new security measures.

78% of married women with children support arming airline pilots.

77% of adults 55 and older support arming airline pilots.

The Airline Passenger Security Survey was conducted October 9–10, 2001 with 800 registered voters across the nation. Margin of error is +/- 3.46.

Last week, the United States Senate passed the Aviation Security Act and the U.S. House of Representatives will be debating these issues shortly.

"We hope the House considers these important views of American people when crafting their bill on airline security," said Charlie Jarvis, President and CEO of United Seniors Association.

Mr. MICA. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

Mr. Chairman, my heart is with the proponents of this amendment, but my vote must reluctantly be with those with whom I have agreed to compromise, so I rise in opposition to this amendment.

Some of the things that have been said by the proponents of this amendment are correct, and all pilots should have the ability to defend themselves. However, in our system, nobody gets their way 100 percent.

Although it has been delightful to see some of the Members who were on the other side of the issue scampering to get back to my original proposal, it is always great to see Members in this body do a 180-degree turn back in the direction of the proposal which I had advocated in the first place, but nonetheless, we have thought this out. We learned some experiences from passing legislation in the heat of passion and in the heat of circumstances post-September 11.

We have heard that the Transportation Security Administration, which we created, which we gave far too many tasks to, which we tried to argue against but we lost that debate, we do not want to make the same mistake now in giving TSA any more than they can put on their platter.

The chairman of the subcommittee on the Committee on Appropriations was quoted a month ago saying that TSA is in chaos. We do not want to add to that chaos. Members have already heard how their finances are stretched. Therefore, we came up with a compromise that allows 2 percent. It does not sound like a lot, but it can be as many as 1,400 pilots to be trained on a voluntary basis with the specifications of weapons, of storage of weapons, of every detail involved in the process of defending the cabin and the cockpit. I think that is a reasonable compromise. I think this is a reasoned and well-thought-out approach.

Mr. Chairman, my colleagues have to understand, too, that TSA, the Transportation Security Administration, has