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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3201

June 6, 2007

**Be an Original Cosponsor of the Airline Flight Crew Family
and Medical Leave Act**
Support Bill to Clarify FMLA for Flight Attendants and Pilots

Dear Colleague:

Shortly, I will be introducing the Airline Flight Crew Family and Medical Leave Act in order to clarify the original 1993 law so that it covers airline crewmembers. I invite you to be an original cosponsor and request your support for this bill.

As you may be aware, the FMLA requires that private employers with at least 50 employees and all public employers provide job-protected unpaid leave for 12 weeks to employees who meet certain hours-of-work eligibility requirements in order to care for themselves or a family member.

To qualify for FMLA, an employee must have worked 60 percent of a full-time schedule over the course of a year, or the equivalent of 1,250 hours. While 1,250 hours adequately reflects 60 percent of a full-time schedule for the vast majority of employees in this country, this hourly requirement does not adequately take into account additional time spent on the job that is unique to flight attendants and pilots.

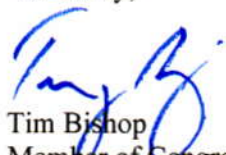
The problem arises in that time between flights, whether during the day or on overnight flights, does not count towards crewmember time at work. Flight attendants and pilots can spend up to five days a week away from home. However, all those hours on the job and away from their families will not count towards FMLA eligibility requirements.

Also, many airline crewmembers are often on "reserve" status, which means that they have to stand-by to be called for duty if others fail to show for an assigned flight. The company recognizes that they are "on duty" and guarantees a set number of hours for which they will be paid each month. However, for FMLA qualifications, only their actual time working counts towards their 1,250 hour threshold.

My legislation clarifies that an airline crewmember will be eligible for FMLA benefits if they have been paid for or completed 60 percent of their company's monthly hour or trip guarantee. This change to the law will apply FMLA requirements to airline employees in order to correct an unintended oversight of the original legislation.

Given the erosion of job security and retirement benefits throughout the airline industry, I encourage you to join me in this effort to apply a fair and well-deserved benefit to the hard-working airline crewmembers we represent. If you would like to be an original cosponsor of this legislation or if you have any additional questions, please contact Joanna Serra in my office at 5-3826.

Sincerely,


Tim Bishop
Member of Congress