

Air Transport Association Testifies That Safety Remains the Bedrock Principle of U.S. Aviation

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The Air Transport Association of America (ATA), the industry trade organization representing the leading U.S. airlines, today testified before the Aviation Operations, Safety and Security Subcommittee of the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee regarding aviation safety oversight by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB).

In prepared testimony, ATA said that safety remains the bedrock principle for U.S. airlines and stakeholders have worked extraordinarily hard to achieve our safety record, which last year saw no fatal air carrier accident in the United States.

"You never rest on your laurels in this business," said ATA Vice President Operations and Safety Basil Barimo who testified on behalf of ATA's 19 member airlines. "The airlines' safety record is so impressive because of the unrelenting commitment by everyone involved -- Congress, FAA, NTSB, manufacturers, airports, maintenance organizations, employees and their unions, and airlines - that commitment has not flagged. The FAA's responsibility to regulate airlines to achieve the highest degree of safety, which Congress has mandated, has not diminished. Nor has the airlines' responsibility to fulfill that mandate diminished. Both are immutable.

Barimo continued, "While airlines realize how unsettling the news about maintenance and regulatory oversight practices has been lately, the unchangeable reality is that airlines have delivered the safest period of flying that our industry has ever experienced and that stellar record will not be compromised."

ATA airline members and their affiliates transport more than 90 percent of all U.S. airline passenger and cargo traffic.

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