

Quiet Rockland - No New Flights Over Rockland

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**To: VIA FAX: 1-202-226-0821, 1-407-657-5353, 1-904-810-5091; 1-386-676-7748;
1-386-860-5730; and U.S. MAIL**

Congressman John Mica (R-FL)
United States House of Representatives
2313 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-0907 USA

**cc: Each Honorable Senator Of The United States Of America, Each Honorable Member
Of The House Of Representatives, The Media, And All Other Interested Parties**

Re: Response To Your March 3, 2008 Letter To Senators Lautenberg and Menendez

Dear Congressman Mica:

After reading your March 3, 2008 letter to Honorable Senators Frank Lautenberg and Robert Menendez, found at:

<http://republicans.transportation.house.gov/Media/File/110th/Aviation/03-03-08-FAAAdministratorLetter.pdf>

Quiet Rockland and others concerned with protecting air safety and our biosphere are compelled to reply. You are incorrect about virtually all your conclusions. Virtually all your rationales you use to reach them, are in error. Why would a Congressman like yourself purposefully disseminate misinformation? The answer is clear. You continue to reside in the pocket of the airline industry, John Mica.

Your letter's introduction seems to suggest that if "Bobby" Sturgell is not confirmed as FAA Administrator, that will lead to a meltdown in aviation safety. Yet we all know that the REAL meltdown has already occurred over the past five years, and you helped. The meltdown was Marion Blakey's and "Bobby" Sturgell's mismanagement of the FAA. Right in your area, Orlando International Airport is experiencing a dangerous shortage of air traffic controllers (ATCs). The shortage is caused by FAA's seemingly-perpetual hostile treatment of its ATCs. But all you can say is "the shortage didn't pose an immediate threat", even though Orlando International has 45% fewer controllers than it had 5 years ago. You deceive the public.

Your responses to the Senator's concerns are flawed and incomplete. Let me respond to some of the further points in your letter:

NY/NJ/PHL Airspace Redesign

Your letter suggests that this Redesign, for which you have in the recent past taken to the road and shamelessly pandered as far north as Ridley Park, Pennsylvania, will solve delay problems. You indicate it is in the national interest that Redesign work proceeds. But what we well know, is that the FAA's supporting "promises" are specious. This proposed Airspace Redesign was a US\$50,000,000 boondoggle whose only purpose was to make

a few people, mostly contractors, very rich. “Bobby” Sturgell has pushed the Redesign along, attempting to rush its implementation ahead of the findings of a GAO audit and investigation which will indubitably bring the Redesign crashing down faster than a Southwest Airlines publicity balloon. According to FAA’s own Chief Operating Officer Henry “Hank” Krakowski, the FAA’s Redesign is but a “Band-Aid” solution at best. And the real sin here, is that after wasting all this United States currency, the Redesign can, according to ATC union NATCA, actually make the delays worse. The Redesign would put more planes in the air than the airports can handle. Sturgell’s FAA in recent years deliberately screened ATCs off of the planning of the Redesign, instead preferring to pay profiteers for US\$50mm worth of useless PowerPoint presentations. You see, Mr. Mica, the capacity limitation is on the ground, which is where the Airspace Redesign falls flat on its face. Your letter says that “no redesign will satisfy everyone”. However, the NY/NJ/PHL Redesign will satisfy no one, except maybe the airline-company profit-takers that will be able to pump even more airplanes into the sky per unit time, further increasing delays – and except those like you, that feed downstream from their trough. What caused the nation’s flight delays was greed expressed in the form of over-scheduling of flights and over-saturation of our skies. It is the bad behavior of the airlines that is really the human cause of these flight delays – that, and the shortage of controllers at the airlines’ and FAA’s hand. Keep the airlines from over-booking and over-saturating the prime timeslots, and then maybe you will see a measurable decrease in delays (not the *exaggerated*, if even actual, 3 minutes that the FAA has “promised” with this Redesign). And now NATCA has raised serious safety concerns regarding the Airspace Redesign. As one whose house will be flown-over by the Redesign if it occurs, I am not going to sit and listen while you misrepresent the facts about the Redesign to the American people.

Air Traffic Controller Staffing Levels

Your letter states that putting a hold on the “Bobby” Sturgell confirmation is somehow at odds with concerns about the shortage of experienced air traffic controllers. I am shocked you have the audacity to make this blatant misrepresentation. It is well-chronicled that air traffic controllers are leaving in record numbers because of the hostile work environment created by the past five years of the Blakey/Sturgell FAA. I have been in contact with many controllers over the past year. Their story is the same. They are each just counting the days until retirement. They hate not their calling, but they hate their management and those like you who shill for their management. The FAA needs a REAL Administrator that can repair the FAA relationship with the air traffic controllers, and stem the exodus of veteran controllers and others - so that as and when these hardworking men and women reach true retirement age, the new controllers will have adequate experience. Maybe then, the ratio of veterans to trainees will be less precarious. “Bobby” Sturgell has shown over the past 5 years that he is incapable of maintaining a productive relationship with his ATC workforce. Both the shortage of ATC’s and the now-FBI-investigated FAA Inspector debacle, drives home that point. You say the “long[-]anticipated wave...of retirements has begun”. If it was so “long[-]anticipated”, then why hasn’t it been addressed and fixed, and why are innocent American lives still being put at risk because of it? “Bobby” Sturgell clearly dropped the ball on this, and he seriously aggravated the problem by mistreating the ATCs that he had remaining. He continues to do so through this day, and you are one of his enablers.

Near-Misses On Runways

Your letter suggests that Senatorial “inaction” will delay pending efforts to address aircraft near-miss and runway-incursion problems. This suggestion by you is also nonsense. The real problem and the reasons for it are outlined above. The Blakey/Sturgell-created shortage of controllers has caused the unconscionable number of recent near-misses – period. So, what you are saying here is, “Confirm the idiot that caused the problem, so that he can solve the problem he caused”. That’s outrageous. And by the way, you have confused “action” with “inaction”. The wise-thinking Senators undertook an affirmative act to put a “Hold” on Sturgell’s confirmation. That’s not “inaction”, *stunade*. That’s a purposeful step to save human lives.

Minimum Fuel Landings

Where do I even start, here? Planes are dangerously landing with the bare minimum of fuel. You say that without a permanent FAA Administrator, the response to this concern will be slower rather than quicker. That is a joke. The Blakey/Sturgell FAA proved itself to be the *Uber*-source of misrepresentations, spin, and outright lies. The current Acting Administrator, a man who somehow prefers the moniker of “Bobby”, has already

proven himself to be untrustworthy and inept. What matter if the answers come slowly or quickly, if they are false and misleading? The issue with the dangerously-low quantities of fuel, has to do with the FAA's now-abdicated function as a regulator. How can "Bobby" Sturgell regulate anyone or anything, considering the outright scandal and current FBI investigation with regard to FAA's own inspectors and inspections? The "cozy" relationship between the failed Sturgell FAA and the Airlines, decried by the House Transportation Committee's leader Congressman Oberstar, leaves no doubt. Sturgell is incapable and undesirous of regulating anyone, or anything. This same airline industry is clearly, at minimum, his future paymaster, just like "Made" Marion Blakey's paymaster. How timely that the Southwest debacle blows up, now, while you are attempting to sell everyone on this failure named Sturgell? - and only five weeks after a scathing Business Week exposé on the same safety inspection issue at Northwestern Airlines. Have you no shame? (Asked and answered).

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The number of additional reasons why the "Hold" should remain on the Sturgell confirmation, are too numerous to fit in this letter. I'll leave it at this, just in case you are ever again tempted to suggest how "qualified" Mr. Sturgell is:

If someone spent the past five years running the FAA into the ground as Number 2, why would any sane person give him the job as Number 1? Sturgell should be ejected rather than nominated. Your next letter should be to the President, to ask that he instead nominate someone who hasn't proven himself to be a failure. Or, perhaps, maybe this "cozy" relationship between FAA and the Airlines provides you with some benefit? One only need effect a cursory review of the campaign contributions you accept, to know for sure:

<http://www.anyonebutmica.com>

People like you don't really care about aviation safety, and therefore do harm to this great country of ours. You're the Un-patriot. All you care about is the corporate "Johns" that fill your campaign coffers. You are in the pocket of the aviation industry. You always have been, all of your political life. You are the walking billboard for what is wrong with our government today. Just like the FAA needs to be cleaned-out from "top to bottom", so too does the part of Congress in which you reside, Sir - the part wherein congressmen like yourself have the "For Rent" sign hanging on your backs.

You are the aero-prince of darkness. You, along with "Happy Harbor" Sturgell and the aviation industry, continually look to preserve the *status quo* and feed from the troth like pigs and goats. You three are the diabolical trinity. A prime example of this diabolical trinity would be the FAA contract with Harris Corp.: (1) FAA awards a billion-dollar contract to Harris. (2) Harris continually screws up, costing billions - but then gives huge amounts of money to your campaign. (3) Mica protects Sturgell. (4) Sturgell protects Harris... and so on, in a vicious cycle of corruption.

How DARE you insinuate that Senator Lautenberg and Senator Menendez are putting parochial political interests over our national interest?! You have no moral standing to suggest that. It is you who are putting private pecuniary aviation interests over national safety, for the sake of your own campaign coffers, and the revolving door of aero-pay.

It was really nice to read in the *Orlando Sentinel* this week that your "power ranking" in the House has slipped from 139th place to 265th place. Hopefully the folks in Florida's 7th district wake up and realize what a failure you really are, with your abysmal record on the environment, and your shameless plugs for the failed FAA Administration of Blakey and Sturgell.

Quiet Rockland again requests that you admit your rank conflicts-of-interest and resign from the House Subcommittee on Transportation and Infrastructure, immediately. You have a history of taking huge amounts of money from aerospace interests and shilling for the failed Blakey/Sturgell FAA. That doesn't just give the appearance of impropriety. It also leaves a foul smell in the halls of Congress at large. Even those in your own party, concerned about public perception of your own party with the November elections looming, should be

calling for your ouster. Oh, and if they don't, **Quiet Rockland** will. Meanwhile, every single member of your own party in Congress, as well as all others in Congress, will have a copy of this letter on their desks and desktops Monday morning, and we respectfully ask that they assist us in ousting you and failed FAA "acting" administrator Sturgell.

Congressman Mica, you disingenuously seek to warn Senator Lautenberg and Senator Menendez that if an aviation disaster soon occurs, it will somehow be on their heads for not having confirmed failed FAA Administrator "Bobby" Sturgell sooner. God forbid if an aviation disaster occurs, it will sooner be the product of the ill-fitting cover-up of a toupée on your head, than any protective and beneficent act of Senators Lautenberg or Menendez.

Very truly yours,

Thomas Sullivan
Pearl River, NY

Quiet Rockland has approved this message.