

Keys to the Capitol Monthly Update - September 2010

Thursday, 30 September 2010

Dear AMFA Members: With Congress racing to finish up work before heading home to campaign ahead of the November elections, work was fast and furious on Capitol Hill in September:

- KTC stayed in the loop with key staff as the FAA Reauthorization Bill came close to passage.
- KTC monitored the situation and held meetings to discuss AMFA issues as it became clear we were headed for another extension.
- And KTC laid the groundwork for a press release being sent to over 800 members of the press highlighting AMFA and KTC's work in Congress to save aircraft mechanic jobs.

Legislation KTC continued to meet with various members of Congress and committee staff to discuss outstanding legislation. In addition, KTC legislative tracking system continued to monitor AMFA specific bills. FAA Airport and Airway Extension Act of 2010(HR 4853)NEW - The House and Senate both passed their own three-month FAA extensions at the end of September. The Senate then passed the House version by voice vote one day later. This is just another in the series of short-term FAA extensions passed by Congress as the two chambers continue to disagree over provisions in a long-term reauthorization. The current extension expires on September 30 with the latest one lasting through December 31. This is the 15th extension that's been passed! FAA Reauthorization Act (HR 915/S1451)NEW - Once again Congress saved themselves three more months to continue work on the bill with the passage of the most recent extension outlined above. The hope is that they will finally tackle the reauthorization during the lame duck session when they return after the election. All signs point to this, but then again with this Congress, nothing has been certain. The issues that are holding up the process have little to do with aviation and plenty to do with politics. FedEx has summoned its considerable political resources to block a proposal that would allow local unionization of its workers. It currently enjoys the provisions of the Railway Act, which only allows national certification of unions. UPS, however, doesn't operate under the same rules and thinks it should. It, too, has considerable political clout. There's also tussle over allowing a more normal airline traffic flow to Reagan National in Washington by opening more long-distance flight slots. Stakeholder Meetings continued in September, despite staff being completely overwhelmed with the rush of legislative movement before the break. Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson

KTC met with the Congresswoman directly at an event we held in the Rayburn House Office Building and briefly discussed the need for her support when the Reauthorization comes up to a vote. She assured us of her continued help when need be. House Aviation Subcommittee Staff

KTC traded multiple emails and call with staff while gauging the likelihood of the FAA Reauthorization passage. The committee is already completely well versed in our issues, so education is no longer necessary. When it became apparent that a last minute extension was going to be passed again, we went up to Capitol Hill for an in person meeting to make sure there were not going to be any surprises.. Senate Transportation Committee Staff

KTC also stopped by to talk with friends on the Senate Committee when the FAA extension began moving to ensure no surprises were in store. Southwest Airlines

KTC is still trying to secure a meeting with Southwest to discuss the SIDA badge, but the busy month made it impossible to find a mutually acceptable time. FAA

KTC has not had time to follow up with Roderick Hall's office but plans to do so within the next few weeks.