

U.S. Senate Committee Votes to Raise Airline Pilots' Retirement Age

Legislation Now Awaits Consideration by Full U.S. Senate

In an unrecorded voice vote, the U.S. Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee passed legislation on November 17 that is designed to establish an upper age limit of 65 in multi-crew operations. It would become effective within 30 days after the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) adopts this standard, which is likely to take place in November 2006.

Under this legislation, a pilot could fly to 65 in operations under Part 121 of Title 14 only as a required pilot in multi-crew aircraft operations, and only when another pilot serving as a required pilot has not yet attained his or her 60th birthday. This legislation would allow a pilot who is retired and between the ages of 60 and 65 to be re-hired, but it would not allow him or her to sue to gain re-employment. The legislation would not provide the basis for a claim of seniority under any labor agreement and a pilot could not sue to regain seniority. Twenty-four months after the legislation is implemented, the National Transportation Safety Board would be required to submit a report to the Senate Commerce Committee concerning the effect of this change on aviation safety.

This legislation now awaits consideration and a vote on the floor of the U.S. Senate, which is unlikely to take place until the first half of 2006. No hearings or votes on the upper age limit in the U.S. House of Representatives have been held during 2005. ALPA will continue to keep you updated as this issue develops.