

Challenge Regional Airlines to Continue to 'Step Up to the Plate'

Buffalo, New York - January 7, 2015 - In light of this morning's public release of a final rule requiring Safety Management Systems for all Part 121 carriers, The 'Families of Continental Flight 3407' commended Secretary of Transportation Anthony Foxx and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Administrator Michael Huerta for their agencies' work in implementing another key provision of Public Law 111-216, the Airline Safety Act.

"Today is another positive step towards our goal of achieving a TRUE 'One Level of Safety' between our nation's regional and mainline passenger carriers," stated Susan Bourque of East Aurora, New York, who lost her sister Beverly Eckert, a noted 9/11 widow and activist. "It is so important that every passenger flying on a regional airline like Great Lakes Airlines receives the benefit of a commitment to and investment in best practice, data-driven safety programs that is commensurate with that of the major carriers like Southwest and Delta, a commitment and investment that my sister Beverly and everyone else lost on Flight 3407 sadly and tragically did not receive. We want to express our heartfelt appreciation to Secretary Foxx and Administrator Huerta, and in particular Associate Administrator for Aviation Safety Peggy Gilligan and her whole team, for grinding through the rule making process to make this much-needed rule a reality."

Wednesday's announcement means that only two provisions from P.L. 111-216 remain to be implemented. One of those provisions addresses the creation of a comprehensive electronic pilot training records database to be used in the screening and hiring of pilots, and the other focuses on implementing pilot professionalism programs at carriers, to include mentoring, leadership, and professional development aspects.

"Since this whole process began with the introduction of H.R. 5900 back in the summer of 2009, the heightened focus on enhancing regional airline safety by Congress, FAA, DOT, the airlines, pilots, and safety groups like ours has resulted in nearly six years and millions of flights with no fatal commercial crashes," stated John Kausner of Clarence Center, New York, who lost his twenty-four year old daughter Elly in a crash that was less than one mile from his home. "However, we cannot rest on our laurels; we cannot take our foot off the gas; as complacency remains our single-biggest enemy. To those who would like to see some of these critical safety measures that have been implemented by FAA watered down or rolled back, we remind you of Elly and all of our loved ones no longer with us; their memory demands that we continue to do

everything possible to ensure that the horrible and very preventable tragedy of Flight 3407 is never again allowed to repeat itself. We call on the key players, from Secretary Foxx and Administrator Huerta, to the congressional leaders on the transportation and aviation committees and subcommittees, to continue to maintain the vigilance and highest standards of safety that has made our country's very safe commercial aviation system even safer."