Mr. Nicholas E. Calio  
President and CEO  
Airlines for America  
1275 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W.  
Suite 1300  
Washington, D.C. 20004  

Dear Mr. Calio:

We are writing to express our concerns over the increased flight cancelations and delays passengers continue to experience across the United States. This past holiday weekend alone, over 2,200 domestic flights were canceled. Meanwhile, both the weekend prior and Memorial Day weekend had cancelations in the hundreds. Recently, too many travelers have been left frustrated and scrambling to rearrange their schedules in response to widespread air travel difficulties.

We appreciate your June 24th letter to U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg outlining steps the airline industry is taking to address this problem. Yet, we request additional information from the industry to identify and evaluate the ongoing issues. Moreover, airlines must take all appropriate steps to ensure the flying public receives the safe and reliable services we have come to expect and deserve.

Please consult with your member airlines and provide responses to the following:

1. Recently, numerous airlines have reported they have trimmed their schedules up to 15 percent when compared to similar timeframes pre-pandemic. Meanwhile, other airlines have increased their flight schedules. To what do you attribute these changes and how will these reductions and increases in summer flights contribute to last-minute flight delays and cancelations?

2. It is our understanding that some airlines moved pilots between aircraft category, class, and type, or removed them from service entirely during the pandemic. Since such pilots must first meet Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) training obligations to return to their original flight obligations, please provide us with the number of “displaced” pilots, a description of the training status of any displaced pilots, and an estimate of when each airline expects to reallocate labor to appropriate aircraft.

3. We have heard reports that, while some member airlines have more pilots than in previous years, airlines have been scheduling operations with aircraft that do not reflect their pilot pool’s current training qualifications. If true, are there other factors that have led to this logistical decision and, if so, what are they?

4. What hiring methods are you using to swiftly fill open positions?

5. What services are your member airlines providing to passengers affected by last minute delays or canceled flights?
6. It is our understanding there have been shifts in travel patterns to different regions of the country and an increase in general aviation travel. How does the aviation industry plan to coordinate with the FAA to ensure the agency can provide enough staffing at air traffic control facilities to maintain a safe airspace and efficient travel?

7. How does the industry plan to learn from any holiday operational challenges and communicate its needs to Congress?

Everyone, no matter their ZIP Code, deserves safe and reliable transportation services. We appreciate your work to address the operational challenges of the aviation sector and look forward to working with you to overcome those challenges. We would appreciate a response by July 12, 2022.

Sincerely,

Nikema Williams
Member of Congress

Rick Larsen
Member of Congress