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CAPA Opposes TSA's changes to Prohibited Items List

Washington, DC -- (March 7, 2013). The Coalition of Airline Pilots Associations (CAPA) which represents over 22,000 professional airline pilots at carriers including American Airlines, US Airways, UPS Airlines, ABX Air, Horizon Airlines, Southern Air, Silver Airways, Kalitta Air, Miami Air, Cape Air, Omni Air and Atlas Air, is opposed to the recent Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) decision to make changes to the TSA's "Prohibited Items List".

TSA Administrator John Pistole announced plans to change the "Prohibited Items List" effective April 25, 2013 to include permitting small knives in carry-on luggage as well as certain sports-related equipment. According to a TSA statement about the planned changes, "The decision to permit certain items in carry-on luggage was made as part of TSA's overall risk-based security approach and aligns TSA with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Standards and our European counterparts."

"While CAPA welcomes the periodic review of items banned from being carried on the airplane, we categorically reject a proposal to allow knives of any kind in the cabin," stated CAPA President Mike Karn. "We believe the threat is still real and the removal of any layer of security will put crewmembers and the flying public unnecessarily in harm's way," he added.

CAPA is deeply concerned that industry stakeholders were not consulted prior to implementing these changes. "Crewmembers are a critical component to aviation security and, as trusted partners to TSA, should be involved in these processes," President Karn stated. "We are concerned that the proposed changes to the prohibited items list could represent a step backwards in aviation security," he added.

CAPA vigorously supports fully funding critical programs such as the Federal Flight Deck Officer Program (FFDO), which deputizes airline pilots as federal law enforcement officers to defend the flight deck, and the Crewmember Self Defense Training Program (CMSDT) which teaches both pilots and flight attendants techniques on how to defend themselves in the aircraft, including when confronted with edged weapons.

"It is clear that the FFDO and CMSDT programs are needed now more than ever as they represent a critically important role in protecting our passengers, crewmembers, cargo and aircraft," stated CAPA President Karn.

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