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April 16, 2018

Elaine Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

According to a recent CBS News "60 Minutes" reportⁱ Allegiant Air, an ultra-low-cost carrier, was found to have more than 100 serious incidents involving mechanical issues in period of less than two years. If true, this is deeply disturbing and I urge you to request that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) review these alarming allegations, and take immediate action to ensure the safety of Allegiant Air passengers and employees.

According to the report, some of these mechanical incidents included mid-air engine failures, smoke and fumes in the cabin, rapid descents, flight control malfunctions, hydraulic leaks, and aborted takeoffs.ⁱ According to industry experts cited in the report, this frequency of serious mechanical incidents is unusually high for an airline of comparable size to Allegiant.ⁱ

The investigative report details a concerning June 8th, 2015 incident involving Allegiant flight 864 during which its captain, Jason Kinzer, made an emergency landing and evacuation due to reports of fire and smoke in the cabin – a decision for which he was later terminated.ⁱ The report notes that Kinzer was terminated for not "striving to preserve the company's assets."ⁱ

This report raises serious questions, which the FAA has yet to adequately address. Profits should not come before safety.

I would appreciate your keeping me apprised of the Department's efforts on this matter.

Thank you for your prompt attention.

As always, I remain,
Most sincerely,



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

CC: Daniel K. Elwell
Acting Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration

ⁱ <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/allegiant-air-60-minutes-defensive-2018-04-16/>