

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Captain Sam Mayer
817-302-2350/203-731-1112
Gregg Overman
817-302-2250/817-312-3901

ALLIED PILOTS ASSOCIATION APPLAUDS DOJ'S FOCUS ON ANTITRUST ENFORCEMENT, QUESTIONS DOT SECRETARY'S COMMENTS

'Secretary of Transportation LaHood at odds with the Obama Administration's commitment to more stringent antitrust enforcement'

Fort Worth, Texas (May 14, 2009)—The Allied Pilots Association (APA), certified collective bargaining agent for the 11,500 pilots of American Airlines (NYSE: AMR), commended the Justice Department's stated commitment to pursuing "vigorous antitrust enforcement" as a means of assuring markets remain competitive. Assistant Attorney General Christine Varney advocated greater antitrust enforcement earlier this week in her first public comments since taking office.

"APA strongly supports the Department of Justice's position that antitrust enforcers 'can no longer sit on the sidelines,'" said APA President Captain Lloyd Hill. "Our nation's antitrust laws benefit consumers by ensuring that we preserve an appropriate level of competition.

"However, Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood's recent remarks in favor of antitrust immunization for airline alliances directly conflict with this philosophy of greater enforcement," Hill said. "Antitrust immunity is by definition anticompetitive, leaving travelers with fewer choices and higher prices."

Last month Secretary LaHood proposed granting antitrust immunity to Continental Airlines for its participation in the Star Alliance, which includes United Airlines, Air Canada and Lufthansa Airlines. More recently, he spoke out in favor of approving antitrust immunity for American Airlines' Oneworld Alliance with British Airways, Iberia, Finnair and Royal Jordanian. In the latter case, interested parties have until May 18 to submit comments.

"Secretary LaHood's comments are problematic on two levels," Hill said. "Not only does he stand in diametric opposition to the Obama Administration's commitment to more vigorous enforcement, but the public comment period concerning American Airlines' application for antitrust immunity remains open. As a result, we question whether the DOT can be objective in its review of pending antitrust immunity applications."

APA has been voicing its concerns about immunizing airline alliances for the past several months, likening the results to “virtual mergers.” The union has repeatedly warned about the negative impact on U.S. workers’ job security, market competitiveness and the nation’s security if the airlines are permitted to proceed. On the latter point, U.S. carriers must remain ready to be deployed as needed for Civil Reserve Air Fleet duty. That readiness could be compromised by cross-border airline alliances or a relaxation in foreign ownership restrictions.

Hill noted that APA’s membership has sent thousands of e-mail messages this week to the White House, Congress and the DOT expressing those concerns.

Founded in 1963, the Allied Pilots Association—the largest independent pilot union in the U.S.—is headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas. APA represents the 11,500 pilots of American Airlines, including 1,969 pilots on furlough. The furloughs began shortly after the September 11, 2001 attacks. Also, several hundred American Airlines pilots are on full-time military leave of absence serving in the armed forces. The union’s Web site address is www.alliedpilots.org. American Airlines is the nation’s second-largest passenger carrier and fifth-largest cargo carrier.