

Opening Statement  
Congressman John T. Salazar  
T&I Aviation Subcommittee Hearing  
Hearing on the NTSB's Most Wanted Aviation Safety Improvements  
June 6, 2007

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you for holding this hearing on the NTSB's Most Wanted Safety Improvements for Aviation.

A couple of the issues on their list—*Fatigue and Crew Resource Management (CRM) Training for Part 135 Flights*— had been brought to my attention by St. Mary's CareFlight, operating out of St. Mary's Hospital and Medical Center in Grand Junction, CO.

The CareFlight program has expressed specific safety concerns within the air medical transport community.

A great majority of air medical crashes over the past 5-7 years have been conducted under FAR Part 91 rules.

As you know, Part 91 allows for much less stringent weather minimums and does not restrict pilot duty time in comparison to Part 135.

Yet Part 135 is currently only required to be used when a patient or an organ is on-board.

This makes no sense to me.

The lives of our pilots and air medical crews should be protected by the same weather minimums and pilot duty-time requirements that these patients are afforded during their leg of the transport.

So my question to the FAA is why are you taking so long to decide?

I am curious to know the FAA's position on this issue—Part 91 versus Part 135.

A second safety issue I want to mention is weather reporting.

One of the leading factors of accidents in Colorado is weather.

I believe that if we could improve the information our pilots receive on weather, it would benefit everyone—especially the NTSB and the FAA.

I realize this is not on the NTSB's list, but I think it's a point worth making.

I look forward to the testimony today and I thank the panel members for being here.

Thank you.