



From the Line: I'm a Born-Again ALPA-PAC Contributor

By First Officer John Wiesinger, SLC

While a dose of skepticism is healthy, for me it has led to apathy on too many important issues. At times I've been a bit cynical about ALPA. Enter Captain Lee Moak's Oct. 24, 2012, "Stand as One" letter. This woke me up to the real perils of cabotage. I enjoy flying with the guys I work with, and I'd like to continue to fly with them, at Delta Air Lines, for the foreseeable future. So, in response to Captain Moak's letter, I decided to get involved with ALPA-PAC. The experience has been great, and I've found them to be responsive, accessible, eager to help, and, most importantly, as bipartisan as one can get regarding the issues threatening our profession.

I began writing to my federal representatives, and one congressman invited me to his office. A few days before my meeting, I realized I was not prepared. My first officer rep suggested I call ALPA-PAC to prep

for the meeting. One call and I was in touch with the "grassroots efforts" coordinator, who got me up to speed. They provided talking points, told me what to expect, and told me the appropriate dress code (our uniform, believe it or not).

My meeting went well. He was receptive to my concerns and I think he recognized the threat that cabotage poses to our careers and the profession as a whole. Someone told me that if an elected official hears personally from a dozen or so constituents on an issue, they pay attention. I don't know how true that is, but still: think of 11,700-plus

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uniformed Delta pilots showing up to talk about their issues.

I now contribute monthly to ALPA-PAC. I'm encouraged by their expertise, assistance, and bipartisan support. Long story short, I'm a born-again ALPA-PAC believer. Those pushing cabotage in the United States will savagely pursue our markets, even more than we pursue beverage and food discounts on a layover. I have a feeling all 11,700-plus Delta pilots would line up at their representatives' doors if we looked a few years down the road and saw unbridled cabotage in place.

Everyone is busy. I thought I didn't have time to drive an hour to my congressman's office. However, a few hours out of one of my off-days pales in comparison to the loss of a career. We put a great deal of energy into debating rest, pay, vacation, schedules . . . the list goes on and on. *Cabotage could make our scope concerns seem like minor blips on our career radar.* We need to make time for our issues.

Lastly, why only try to contain the threat? Why not take the fight to the backyard of those who want our flying? ▾

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