

U.S. Sen. Baldwin and Sen. Capito: Introduce bipartisan legislation to help stop offshoring of plane maintenance, support American workers

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Senator Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) introduced the bipartisan *Global Aircraft Maintenance Safety Improvement Act*, legislation that seeks to return aircraft maintenance to the U.S. by removing incentives for airlines to offshore this work. The legislation would ensure that foreign aviation repair stations are subject to the same safety standards as American aviation repair companies, helping bolster passenger safety and level the playing field for U.S. companies.

“When American planes need maintenance, we should be encouraging trusted American workers and American companies to do the work, not ship the jobs overseas to businesses that might be skirting critical safety standards,” **said Senator Baldwin.** “This common-sense legislation will close loopholes that incentivize airlines to ship their maintenance to other countries with potentially lower safety standards, giving passengers peace of mind that their aircraft is safe for flight.”

There are nearly 1,000 Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) certified maintenance and repair stations operating outside the United States. These stations service American aircraft, but many operate at a far lower safety standard than their American-based counterparts, incentivizing businesses to have this work done in less regulated countries. The *Global Aircraft Maintenance Safety Improvement*

Act would ensure that aircraft maintenance workers around the world are as qualified as their American technicians. Specifically, this legislation requires foreign technicians to undergo background checks and drug and alcohol testing. The bill also mandates that foreign stations be subject to surprise inspections and keep better maintenance records.

“Currently, foreign repair stations are not required to have surprise inspections, and the workers are not required to undergo background checks or drug and alcohol testing. The bipartisan *Global Aircraft Maintenance Safety Improvement Act* aims to fix this issue by creating a level playing field for safety. This is one of my top priorities as we move through the FAA reauthorization process, and I’m proud to join my colleagues in introducing this smart, commonsense policy,” **Senator Capito said.**

“Wisconsin is home to more than a thousand certified aircraft mechanics who follow the rules and keep our aircraft safety maintained,” **said Brian Coyne, Vice President of TWU Local 591 and 31-year FAA-certified Aircraft Maintenance Technician.** “The FAA holds us accountable and can take away our careers if we send a broken plane into the air. But the FAA does nothing to maintain this same standard at the facilities it certifies outside the U.S. That’s not only wrong, it’s dangerous, and it’s costing Wisconsinites jobs. Senator Baldwin’s bill will ensure that there is one standard for safe maintenance on commercial aircraft and return jobs to the U.S.”

“The offshoring of heavy maintenance of U.S. aircraft is a dirty little secret of the airline industry, and one our very own FAA has enabled for decades,” **said TWU International President John Samuelson.** “Even though the FAA requires U.S. air carriers to maintain, overhaul, and repair their aircraft at certified facilities, the agency has created a double standard by exempting overseas facilities from vital safety oversight – including mandatory background checks and random drug & alcohol inspections that U.S. based mechanics face. Today, more than half of the workers maintaining U.S. flagged aircraft now perform this safety sensitive work on foreign soil, which is why TWU is fighting to bring this work back to the U.S. or for the FAA to enact safety standards abroad. Senators Baldwin and Capito are calling out this unfair and unsafe practice. The Global Aircraft Maintenance Safety Improvement Act will establish one level of safety for aircraft maintenance and return jobs to the U.S.”

“For 20 years, we’ve called for greater FAA oversight of foreign repair stations

where U.S. aircraft undergo maintenance,” **said Transportation Trades Department (TTD), AFL-CIO President Greg Regan.** “It’s simple: foreign repair stations should be held to the same safety standards as our domestic repair stations. We applaud Senator Baldwin and Senator Capito for introducing this legislation to implement long overdue safety reforms.”

Full text of the legislation is available [here](#).

An online version of this release is available [here](#).