Southwest Airlines Pilots Association Files Lawsuit against Boeing over the Grounding of the Boeing 737 MAX

Aircraft Maker’s Misrepresentations Have Already Cost SWAPA Pilots More Than $100 Million

(DALLAS) — The Southwest Airlines Pilots Association (SWAPA) today announced that it has filed a lawsuit against The Boeing Company for deliberately misleading the organization and its pilots about the 737 MAX aircraft.

The lawsuit, filed in the District Court of Dallas County, Texas, alleges that SWAPA pilots agreed to fly the 737 MAX aircraft based on Boeing's representations that it was airworthy and essentially the same as the time-tested 737 aircraft that its pilots have flown for years. These representations were false. Boeing's errors cost the lives of 346 people, damaged the critical bond between pilots and passengers, and reduced opportunities for air travel across the United States and around the world.

“As pilots, there is nothing more important to us than the safety of our passengers,” said Captain Jonathan L. Weaks, President of SWAPA. “We have to be able to trust Boeing to truthfully disclose the information we need to safely operate our aircraft. In the case of the 737 MAX, that absolutely did not happen.”

The grounding of the 737 MAX has caused the elimination of more than 30,000 scheduled Southwest flights. This is expected to reduce the airline’s passenger service 8% by the end of 2019, resulting in compensation losses for SWAPA pilots in excess of $100 million. Southwest is the largest operator of the 737 MAX, and the aircraft is not expected to return to passenger service until the first quarter of 2020.

“It is critical that Boeing takes whatever time is necessary to safely return the MAX to service,” added Captain Weaks. “Our pilots should not be expected to take a significant and ever-expanding financial loss as a result of Boeing’s negligence. We look forward to a solution that helps Boeing restore the confidence of both the flying public and the pilots who operate its aircraft.”

The Complaint is available here.

About SWAPA
Located in Dallas, Texas the Southwest Airlines Pilots Association (SWAPA) is a non-profit employee organization and the sole bargaining unit for the more than 9,700 pilots of Southwest Airlines. SWAPA, now in its 41st year, works to provide a secure and rewarding career for Southwest pilots and their families through negotiating contracts, defending contractual rights, protecting their professional interests, and actively promoting professionalism and safety. For more information on the Southwest Airlines Pilots Association, visit www.swapa.org.