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Airlines' safety record speaks for itself

Re: "Who's fixing that airplane while you're getting groped?" Beltway Confidential, April 27

Your coverage of the Transport Workers Union of America's recent report on aviation maintenance was disappointingly one-sided. In recent years, airlines have increasingly contracted maintenance to specialized repair stations that perform the work more efficiently. This helps them become more competitive without compromising safety.

Regardless of where the work is done, all U.S.-registered aircraft are inspected and repaired to the same stringent Federal Aviation Administration standards.

The aviation maintenance industry's impact on the U.S. economy is \$39 billion per year and it employs more than 274,000 American workers, with a \$2.4 billion positive balance of trade for the United States.

Scare tactics used by labor organizations like TWU, which raise false safety arguments to achieve short-term political and economic advantage, are very effective. TWU is urging Congress to pass legislation that would make it harder for airlines to use repair stations and unnecessarily drive up maintenance costs. Ironically, that would make U.S. air carriers less competitive and potentially cost airline employees (including TWU mechanics) their jobs.

What the TWU report (and *The Examiner*) failed to mention is that as airlines have increased their use of foreign and domestic repair stations, the accident rate has fallen dramatically and we are now in the safest period in the history of civil aviation. That simple fact speaks for itself.

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