

119TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 4452

To amend title 49, United States Code, to raise the retirement age for pilots engaged in commercial aviation operations, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 30, 2026

Mr. GRAHAM (for himself and Mr. KELLY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

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## A BILL

To amend title 49, United States Code, to raise the retirement age for pilots engaged in commercial aviation operations, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Let Experienced Pilots  
5 Fly Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. INCREASED RETIREMENT AGE FOR PILOTS.**

7 Section 44729 of title 49, United States Code, is  
8 amended to read as follows:

1 **“§ 44729. Age standards for pilots**

2       “(a) IN GENERAL.—A pilot may serve in multicrew  
3 covered operations described in subsection (b)(1) until at-  
4 taining 67 years of age. Air carriers that employ pilots  
5 who serve in covered operations described in subsection  
6 (b)(2) may elect to implement an age restriction to pro-  
7 hibit employed pilots from serving in such covered oper-  
8 ations after attaining 70 years of age by delivering written  
9 notice to the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Ad-  
10 ministration. Such election—

11               “(1) shall take effect 1 year after the date of  
12 delivery of written notice of the election; and

13               “(2) may not be terminated after the date on  
14 which such election takes effect by the air carrier.

15       “(b) COVERED OPERATIONS DEFINED.—In this sec-  
16 tion, the term ‘covered operations’ means operations—

17               “(1) under part 121 of title 14, Code of Fed-  
18 eral Regulations, unless the operation takes place  
19 in—

20                       “(A) the territorial airspace of a foreign  
21 country where such operations are prohibited by  
22 the foreign country; or

23                       “(B) international airspace where such op-  
24 erations are not in compliance with the Annexes  
25 to the Convention on International Civil Avia-  
26 tion; or

1 “(2) by a person that—

2 “(A) holds an air carrier certificate issued  
3 pursuant to part 119 of title 14, Code of Fed-  
4 eral Regulations, to conduct operations under  
5 part 135 of such title;

6 “(B) holds management specifications  
7 under subpart K of title 91 of title 14, Code of  
8 Federal Regulations; and

9 “(C) performed an aggregate total of at  
10 least 75,000 turbojet operations in calendar  
11 year 2019 or any subsequent year.

12 “(c) REGULATIONS.—On and after the date of enact-  
13 ment of the Let Experienced Pilots Fly Act, subsections  
14 (d) and (e) of section 121.383 of title 14, Code of Federal  
15 Regulations, shall be deemed to have been amended to in-  
16 crease the age listed in such subsections to 67 years of  
17 age.

18 “(d) APPLICABILITY.—

19 “(1) NONRETROACTIVITY.—No person who has  
20 attained 65 years of age before the date of enact-  
21 ment of the Let Experienced Pilots Fly Act may  
22 serve as a pilot for an air carrier engaged in covered  
23 operations unless—

24 “(A) such person is in the employment of  
25 that air carrier in such operations on such date

1 of enactment as a required flight deck crew  
2 member; or

3 “(B) such person is newly hired by an air  
4 carrier as a pilot on or after such date of enact-  
5 ment without credit for prior seniority or prior  
6 longevity for benefits or other terms related to  
7 length of service prior to the date of rehire  
8 under any labor agreement or employment poli-  
9 cies of the air carrier.

10 “(2) PROTECTION FOR COMPLIANCE.—An ac-  
11 tion taken in conformance with this section, taken in  
12 conformance with a regulation issued to carry out  
13 this section, or taken prior to the date of enactment  
14 of the Let Experienced Pilots Fly Act in conform-  
15 ance with subsection (d) or (e) of section 121.383 of  
16 title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect  
17 before such date), may not serve as a basis for liabil-  
18 ity or relief in a proceeding, brought under any em-  
19 ployment law or regulation, before any court or  
20 agency of the United States or of any State or local-  
21 ity.

22 “(e) AMENDMENTS TO LABOR AGREEMENTS AND  
23 BENEFIT PLANS.—Any amendment to a labor agreement  
24 or benefit plan of an air carrier that is required to conform  
25 with the requirements of this section or a regulation issued

1 to carry out this section, and is applicable to pilots rep-  
2 resented for collective bargaining, shall be made by agree-  
3 ment of the air carrier and the designated bargaining rep-  
4 resentative of the pilots of the air carrier.

5 “(f) MEDICAL STANDARDS AND RECORDS.—

6 “(1) MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS AND STAND-  
7 ARDS.—Except as provided by paragraph (2), a per-  
8 son serving as a pilot for an air carrier engaged in  
9 covered operations shall not be subject to different  
10 medical standards, or different, greater, or more fre-  
11 quent medical examinations, on account of age un-  
12 less the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Ad-  
13 ministration determines (based on data received or  
14 studies published after the date of enactment of the  
15 Let Experienced Pilots Fly Act) that different med-  
16 ical standards, or different, greater, or more fre-  
17 quent medical examinations, are needed to ensure an  
18 adequate level of safety in flight.

19 “(2) DURATION OF FIRST-CLASS MEDICAL CER-  
20 TIFICATE.—No person who has attained 60 years of  
21 age may serve as a pilot of an air carrier engaged  
22 in covered operations unless the person has a first-  
23 class medical certificate. Such a certificate shall ex-  
24 pire on the last day of the 6-month period following  
25 the date of examination shown on the certificate.

1       “(g) SAFETY TRAINING.—Each air carrier engaged  
2 in covered operations shall continue to use pilot training  
3 and qualification programs approved by the Federal Avia-  
4 tion Administration.”.

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