

# Press Release

## The High Risk of Privatizing the US Air Traffic Control System

February 7, 2018

Isle of Palm, SC, Mr. Douglas A. Decker, P.E. presented a “White Paper” highlighting the high risks of privatizing the FAA air traffic control system, both to citizens of South Carolina and the nation. The presentation was made before the South Carolina Aeronautics Commission.

The Aeronautics Commission meeting was held in conjunction with the South Carolina Aviation Associations Annual Meeting.

Mr. Decker, reviewed the Air Traffic Control Legislation H.R. 2997 that is pending in the US House of Representatives that would turn over management of the Nation’s Air Traffic Control (ATC) system and related services to a federally chartered, not-for-profit, non-government corporation, private monopoly controlled by the airlines. Presently the FAA operates the ATC system.

Mr. Decker presented the reasons he believes such a change is a very bad idea. He pointed out how this would affect tens of thousands of communities like ours around the country who depend on our local airports. These airports provide critical services such as medical care, law enforcement, and disaster relief.

Mr. Decker and COL. John W. McDonald (Ret) collaborated in the preparation of the “White Paper”, which details the many risks involved in transforming the safest and most complex aviation system in the world to a private corporation.

### National Security

Mr. Decker pointed out that the United States aviation assets remain the greatest terrorism target in the world. The FAA and DOD collaborate 24/7 to protect our aerial borders and homeland security and work seamlessly and share information openly.

The DOD Policy Board raises serious concerns that privatization would jeopardize the “command and control” between DOD and FAA. What if one of these private corporation employees inserts malicious software into the ATC system? Will it shut down the US airspace indefinitely? When it comes to securing the country against a multitude of threats, federal agencies and organizations have proved competent and capable said Mr. Decker.

Do we really want a private company managing our national security assets?

Consider the following:

- FAA system addresses sensitive military operations throughout the country.
- Classified operations are managed directly with controllers in a secure FAA environment composed of US citizens?
  - Would private corporation coordination with the military be effective, responsive and secure perhaps with even foreign nationals employed?
  - The US military conducts over 5,200 controlled flights daily. Will they receive the priority they need to accomplish their missions?
  - Does the country really want a private corporation controlling the flight of Air Force One?

In addition to the potential national security threats, Mr. Decker listed the following as losses to American taxpayers:

- American taxpayers have invested more than \$50 Billion in ATC assets in last 20 years.
- ATC privatization bill hands over these and more billions of taxpayer monies to the private corporation free of charge.
- The CBO stated that ATC privatization bill would increase the deficit by \$20 billion over next 10 years and billions more in subsequent decades.
- American Taxpayers would be responsible for bailing out the private corporation if it were to default.

Mr. Decker urged individuals to voice their concerns with their elected congressional representative and recommend that they VOTE NO on H.R. 2997.

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