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Congress of the United States
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January 10, 2024

Mr. David L. Calhoun
President and Chief Executive Officer
The Boeing Company
929 Long Bridge Drive
Arlington, VA, 22202

Dear Mr. Calhoun,

As the Member of Congress who represents California's 35th Congressional District, which includes Ontario International Airport (ONT), I write with significant concerns about the Boeing 737 aircraft. On January 5, 2024, there was an incident with Alaska Airlines Flight 1282 that occurred on your Boeing aircraft, whose destination was Ontario International Airport. I invite you to meet with me in Washington, D.C., to discuss the matters below.

Alaska Airlines Flight 1282 departed Portland on a Boeing Max 737-9, which is manufactured by your company. It was reported that the same plane used for Alaska Airlines Flight 1282 experienced three pressurization warnings from cockpit dashboard lights between December 7th and January 4th, with one occurring in-flight¹. I applaud the efforts of the flight attendants and flight crew that ran to the side of unaccompanied minors on the flight to protect them². Several passengers on the flight experienced injuries that required immediate medical attention³. Since this incident, United Airlines also found loose bolts on door plugs on several Boeing 737 MAX-9 aircraft⁴. I am deeply troubled by the Boeing 737 Max aircraft's safety history and its use as a passenger aircraft despite numerous safety concerns.

Boeing's recent safety record including the 2018 and 2019 fatal crashes of the Boeing Max 8 aircraft model -- raises further questions about passenger safety. The devastating first crash, which occurred in October 2018, involved a 737 Max 8 operated by Indonesia's Lion Air that killed 189 passengers. The second crash, which occurred in March 2019, killed 157 passengers when an Ethiopian Airlines-operated 737 Max 8 crashed minutes after take-off⁵. After these unfortunate incidents, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) grounded the 737 Max 8 and Max 9 while it investigated the circumstances of both events⁶.

Despite questionable compliance with safety standards in the past, this is not the first time Boeing has requested an exemption to bring the MAX 7 aircraft to the market without absolute certainty of the integrity of the aircraft. Recent reports indicate that your company is petitioning the FAA to bypass some safety standards for its Boeing 737-7 models for the engine's anti-ice system⁷. Additionally, in late-

¹ <https://www.koin.com/news/oregon>

² <https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/08/us/alaska-airlines-plug-door-found-investigation-monday/index.html>

³ <https://news.alaskaair.com/alaska-airlines/operations/as-1282/>

⁴ <https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/08/united-airlines-737-max-9-inspections-turn-up-loose-bolts.html>

⁵ <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ethiopian-airlines-plane-crash>

⁶ https://www.faa.gov/sites/faa.gov/files/2021-08/Emergency_Order.pdf

⁷ <https://www.seattletimes.com/business/boeing-aerospace>

December your company notified airlines to check for a possible loose bolt in the rudder control system. However, your company still delivered 737 MAX planes and stated that they are safe to operate⁸. Similarly, your company also discovered an undelivered aircraft that had a nut that was not properly tightened. Your company stated that there had been no “in-service incidents” caused by possible loose hardware, but Alaska Airlines Flight 1282 changed that.

Below are a few concerns of the Boeing 737 MAX aircraft that have been noticed in the last few years:

- In January 2024: Boeing’s 737 MAX-9 aircraft suffered a blowout midflight.
- In August 2023: Boeing and Spirit AeroSystems discovered improperly drilled fastener holes in the aft pressure bulkhead — which maintains pressure when planes are at cruising altitude – on some models of the 737 Max⁹.
- In April 2023: Boeing halted deliveries of some 737 MAXs due to a supplier quality problem by Spirit AeroSystems that could stretch back to 2019¹⁰.
- In April 2021: Boeing halted 737 MAX deliveries after electrical problems re-grounded part of the fleet¹¹.

I look forward to your response to the questions below:

1. Your company established the Aerospace Safety Committee¹² and stated that “safety is our top priority.” What role does the Committee play in ensuring there is proper maintenance of aircraft?
2. What action does the Committee take when there are issues with your aircraft, such as Alaska Airlines Flight 1282 and the electrical problems in April 2021?
3. When your company notifies airlines of an issue with their aircraft, does Boeing send out technicians to work with the airlines, or what role does Boeing play?
4. What is your company doing to help the passengers that were on Alaska Airlines Flight 1282?
5. How can the flying public have confidence when flying on your aircraft if issues keep arising?

Our mutual goal is the safety of the flying public. As a member of the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Subcommittee on Appropriations, I look forward to working with your company to discuss next steps to address this incident. I am extremely concerned about this incident and look forward to your response addressing my concerns. Please contact my Washington, D.C. office at 202-225-6161 to schedule a meeting with me to discuss this issue as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress

⁸ <https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/boeing>

⁹ <https://apnews.com/article/spirit-aerosystems-boeing-737-fuselage>

¹⁰ <https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/boeing>

¹¹ <https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace>

¹² <https://www.boeing.com/resources/boeingdotcom>