

Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (NY-28) praised passage of legislation improving airline safety nearly a year and a half since the Continental Connection Flight 3407 tragedy.

By a voice vote, the House passed the safety provisions as part of HR 5900, the Airline Safety and Federal Aviation Administration Extension Act, late on Thursday night. The legislation now goes to the Senate and is expected to be taken up tomorrow.

Slaughter's remarks from the House floor are available below.

Video of Slaughter on the floor is available here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V-soRfxl0H0>

Text of Slaughter's Remarks on the House floor:

I thank you so much for your time. I thank you even more for your assistance and Mr. Oberstar in bringing us to this moment this evening. I thank Mr. Mica and Mr. Petri for their work they have done as well.

My heart -- I watched the families over this year and a half, watched them with the pain on their faces. We talked to them in my office the lives, who would give you away at the wedding, who was going to be the person is your father at Christmas time or mother at a child. And I want to call attention to it was Karen and Susan, sisters of Beverly who died in that plane crash. Her husband died at the World Trade Center. We got to know her and her sisters took up this banner to make sure that this would not happen to other people. They have learned to live through their tragedy. But what they have been doing all this time is working for us. They have made sure that none of the rest of us will endure this kind of tragedy. I know how grateful I am and everybody in America owes them a debt of gratitude.

No airline should have sent into Buffalo, New York, in February, two pilots who didn't have the foggiest idea how to fly through ice. We found they were extraordinarily exhausted and paid so little that they had to fly to Newark and get their plane and couldn't even afford a hotel room and one of them slept on the floor to get to Newark. Others were sleeping in chairs at the post. How terrible is this that these are the people exhausted, underpaid, undertrained and many of them with great failures on their record that nobody ever knows about. How tragic for these families that these were the people in charge of the plane that night.

Now every person on that plane was extraordinarily precious. We love and miss every one of them. Also the families who lived in the house where the plane fell, they lost their father. I will tell you on that plane was one of the world's greatest anthropologists. On that plane was one of the world's greatest musicians. Everybody on that plane had particular talents and gifts and families that they loved. It should have never happened to them and that's why this is so important to all of us and we know that crash could have been prevented.

I thank our Transportation Secretary, Mr. LaHood. I want to say to you, we can't say thank you enough. We know the -- Mr. Costello is right and we seem to pass bills and they fall into that black recess, but the lessons that we have learned from flight 3407 we will have another opportunity to try to get this right and not rest until we get this right.

But all of us want to say again to the families who are here who have been with us, who have extended extraordinary patience and come at their own expense, have suffered. It's astonishing, but the lessons they have learned from their loss was to take that end to a gain for all of us. Thank you very much for all the work that you have done. We appreciate it and I hope no family will ever be confronted with the disaster that this was and could be avoided. I yield back.