



# CONGRESSIONAL PILOT CAUCUS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | 07.25.13**

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## **CONGRESSIONAL PILOT CAUCUS HOLDS INAUGURAL EVENT**

*Reception celebrates the pilot experience*

(WASHINGTON D.C.) – The Congressional Pilot Caucus Inaugural Reception held last Wednesday gave more than 70 attendees an opportunity to celebrate a shared interest – a passion for flight. Co-hosted by Reps. Sam Graves, R-Mo., and Collin Peterson, D-Minn., the event was sponsored by the NetJets Association of Shared Aircraft Pilots (NJASAP) and the Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association (SWAPA), the labor advocates who represent the professional interests of more than 10,000 flight deck crewmembers.

The Caucus was established by NJASAP, SWAPA and The Keelen Group earlier this year as a way to give Congressional members who have flown as professional or military pilots or who fly purely for pleasure an opportunity to share their experiences as airmen and women. The first event was very well attended with 19 Congressional members stopping by after a very busy day in their respective chambers. Event sponsors were especially pleased to welcome Rep. Ralph Hall, R-Texas, the last World War II veteran currently serving in Washington, and Rep. Tammy Duckworth, D-Ill., a Black Hawk helicopter pilot who was wounded while flying combat missions in Iraq in November 2004.

“On behalf of NJASAP and SWAPA, I am very pleased to extend my sincere gratitude to those members who attended the event,” SWAPA President Mark Richardson said. “We look forward to maintaining an active Caucus, which celebrates the intrepid spirit that compels men and women to take to the skies.” More events are being planned through the end of the year.

In addition to its social objective, Caucus sponsors anticipate the group will emerge as an informed, relevant voice on Capitol Hill for pilot-specific issues. “Members of the Congressional Pilot Caucus share a language and a broader understanding of aviation-specific issues that only comes from participating as an aviator,” NJASAP President John Malmberg remarked. “This group provides a way to collectively leverage this experience and expertise for their constituencies and the American public.”

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**About NJASAP** Founded in 2008 as an independent labor affiliate, the NetJets Association of Shared Aircraft Pilots (NJASAP) represents the professional interests of the 2,500-plus pilots who fly in the service of NetJets Aviation, Inc. The Association, which is based in Columbus, Ohio and is governed by a nine-member Executive Board, maintains a 14-member Stewards Council, employs seven professional staff members, and supports a network of more than 150 volunteers who manage more than 20 committees.

**About SWAPA** The Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association (SWAPA) is the sole bargaining unit for the more than 6,500 pilots who fly in the service of Southwest Airlines; the Dallas-based union was founded in 1978. Southwest pilots are leaders in aviation industry productivity and are the world's leading experts on flying the Boeing-737. Southwest Airlines operates a growing fleet of 737-300, 737-500, 737-700 and 737-800 aircraft.