

STATEMENT OF SENATOR BOB DOLE
PUBLIC HEARING
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
DUERKSEN FINE ARTS CENTER AUDITORIUM
WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY
WICHITA, KANSAS
9:00 A.M., OCTOBER 21, 1970

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Mr. Chairman and members of the board:

The tragic crash of the chartered plane carrying members of the Wichita State University football team saddened all Kansans. But while we grieve for those young men and their leaders, we must take effective action to prevent such occurrences in the future. Because your responsibility is limited to a determination of the facts and circumstances relating to this particular aircraft accident, there must be a more general investigation into the regulation and operation of the charter airline business.

Colleges and universities without large travel budgets must have safe and efficient transportation available to them. At present, it is often difficult to arrange standard charter flights. Scheduled airlines and supplemental carriers operate largely with jets, which are too big and expensive for smaller schools. Furthermore, reliable charter companies may not be within a reasonable distance of the school. As a result, these schools are left in the position of relying on non-scheduled companies that may only technically comply with F.A.A. regulations.

I commend Secretary of Transportation Volpe for appointing his Assistant Secretary for Safety and Consumer Affairs, Admiral Willard J. Smith, to conduct a broad study of chartered aircraft services.

However, in my opinion, Congress must also review F.A.A. and C.A.B. practices and procedures to determine if additional legislation is necessary. The Congress should determine if we must have new legislation to insure that safe and dependable air charter service is available throughout the country. Further, Congress should determine if F.A.A. procedures are sufficient to prevent

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evasion or violation of safety regulations and if the F.A.A. has sufficient resources to implement these procedures. In addition, the regulatory philosophy presently applied to charter airline operations may not be adequate. Requiring only minimum compliance with safety regulations places a charter passenger at a disadvantage in comparison to those using regular commercial service. A fare-paying passenger should be covered under an equivalent level of safety, whatever his mode of transportation.

I hope action can be taken on this matter soon after the first of the year. We cannot allow our schools and their students to be put at the mercy of a system that is neither safe nor convenient.