

something wrong, but when our inspectors, when they try to do the same thing, they are harassed and, in effect, told to be quiet or removed from their positions.

I, and I assume other Members of this Committee, will be working to make sure that the FAA helps guide the airlines and themselves in the direction of encouraging openness and honesty in the interest of safety and the security and airworthiness of the planes.

With that, I yield back. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. OBERSTAR. I thank the gentleman.

Chairman Costello.

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I could ask a lot of questions. I think we could probably keep this panel here for another few hours. I am anxious to get to the next panel actually, but let me make a couple of comments.

One is a follow-up to my friend from Kansas, Mr. Moran, who asked the question, is this a matter of funding or is it a management personnel issue.

I would just like for the record for people to understand that numerous times when the Administration and representatives, both the Administrator and others representing the FAA have testified before the Aviation Subcommittee, we have asked that question: Do you have adequate numbers? Do you have adequate inspectors in order to do the job or do you need more?

The answer has always been we could always use more, but we have adequate numbers.

I have said, if you need more, tell us, and we will attempt to provide the funding so that you can hire more inspectors.

They have never come back, to my knowledge, with a number, certainly not to me and certainly not to this Committee.

So I want to make that very clear, that it is not a matter of the Administration or the FAA requesting additional inspectors. We have asked that question. They have said, we have adequate numbers.

Number two is that I think it is worth noting that in the reauthorization bill that we passed on September 20th in the House, that we have historical levels in the reauthorization bill to accomplish a number of things including hiring additional inspectors because it is our belief and certainly my belief that we need to hire additional inspectors.

I wanted to make both of those points on the record so that they were not missed.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. DeFazio.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Yes, Mr. Chairman, I don't want to keep the panel. I mean they have been very generous with their time, but I wanted to go back again to Mr. Boutris' testimony.

I think the question is, at least among us—we may hear differently from some of the Administration witnesses—there is a larger problem than one rogue guy, and the question becomes how do we deal with this more systemically.

I guess one of the proposals is to have a hot line, and I thought Mr. Boutris' criticism of that was pretty well taken. I would like him to comment, and others, where you say if management doesn't