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June 7 2020

Dear Commerce Committee Members,

My name is Paul Njoroge. I lost my wife Carolyn Karanja, our three children, Ryan, Kellie and Rubi and my mum-in-law Anne Karanja in the crash of the Boeing 737 MAX plane in Ethiopia on March 10, 2019. On that day, I lost my entire family and the absolute meaning of my former life. It has been more than a year since the crash, and I have been a shell of a man in search of a new meaning. I have sought to understand why my entire family would die in a new plane that steered itself into a nose-dive, speeding up to bury them 30ft deep into the ground.

I came to understand that the FAA and Boeing did not focus on their fundamental responsibility of ensuring that only safe planes fly. I mentioned this issue in my testimony before the US House Subcommittee on Aviation on July 17, 2019. The world has come to see a clear case of 'regulatory capture' whereby the FAA has been captured by Boeing and therefore serving the interest of Boeing and the industry. Boeing has taken advantage of this 'capture' to maximize on production, profitability, and growth.

Within the last one year, discovery of multitude of incidences, actions, and lack of actions by Boeing and FAA's staff, has depicted a significant level of negligence, misconduct and hubris that led to the design, manufacturing and sale of flawed 737 MAX planes; which culminated to the painful death of my wife, my three children and my mum-in-law. To this day, I am yet to know if the FAA knew of the existence of the safety system MCAS in the 737 MAX plane and its behavioral characteristics before the crash of Lion Air Flight JT610. It has however been reported that Boeing hid critical information from the FAA, at various stages of the certification, design, and manufacturing of the 737 MAX.

It has been discovered that employees at Boeing had significant doubts about the stability and safety of the 737 MAX to the extent of coining the phrase, 'that the plane was designed by clowns who were in turn supervised by monkeys'. As per their email exchanges, Boeing employees could not fly or allow their families to fly in 737 MAX planes. The greatest pain in my life is living with the knowledge that Boeing knew, with a significant level of certainty, that the 737 MAX was prone

to crashes even before they delivered the first plane. And certainly, the FAA knew this after the crash of Lion Air JT610 and before the second crash that killed my family. In December 2018, FAA officials ignored their own assessment (the Transport Risk Assessment Methodology – TARAM) report that 15 737-MAX crashes would occur in the unforeseeable future over the lifespan of the plane. That act of disregard to human life robbed me off my happy family life.

I and scores of families of ET302 victims have met with several US lawmakers, the FAA, and other policymakers in effort to promote aviation safety. So that no other family would go through this agonizing pain of unreasonably losing their loved ones. Despite all our efforts, I am always overwhelmed by emotions when I see Boeing and the FAA refusing to take responsibility over the death of my wife, my children, and my mum-in-law, and 341 others. FAA believes that their operating framework is a gold-standard even in the face of this 737 Max crisis. In separate meetings with both former Acting Administrator Daniel Elwell, and the current Administrator Steve Dickson, the FAA finds no gaps in its delegation framework. No employee has been disciplined by neither Boeing nor the FAA.

Families of ET302 have requested Chairman Wicker and many members of the Committee to look beyond the testimonies of FAA's staff and Boeing staff, and allow family members, outside experts, and whistle-blowers to testify at hearings. To make sure that the FAA recaptures its authority as an oversight body instead of a 'promoter of industry'. To ensure that Boeing refocuses on production of safe planes instead of focusing on its stock. These requests were not met. Instead, Senator Wicker proposed the so called 'Aircraft Safety Improvement Act of 2020' bill which seeks to promote the industry rather than promote aviation safety. The bill does not change the current FAA's delegation framework which allowed Boeing to design and manufacture flawed 737 Max planes. The bill lacks teeth and is an insult to me and other families, and broadly an insult to humanity.

The broader task of this Committee is to safeguard lives through a thorough investigation of the crashes and a well thought out Aircraft Safety framework. The safety of the entire human race depends on decisions made by this Committee. Make it right.

Sincerely,

Paul Njoroge, husband of Carolyn Karanja, father of Ryan Njuguna, Kellie Pauls, and Rubi Pauls,  
Son-in-law of Anne Karanja.