

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 12, 2025

Mitchell Behm
Deputy Inspector General &
Acting Inspector General
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Behm:

We write to request that you swiftly open an investigation into the Federal Aviation Administration's ("FAA") actions prior to and following the January 29, 2025 midair collision between American Airlines Flight 5342 and a U.S. Army Black Hawk helicopter. The crash claimed 67 lives, making it the deadliest U.S. aviation accident since 2001. Your attention to this matter is critical and necessary to provide faith and assurance in the safety of the National Capital Region's airspace and the National Airspace System.

An investigation should review any factors that did or could have contributed to the incident, including:

1. FAA training and operations in the National Capital Region;
2. The concurrent use of helicopter routes and runways at DCA;
3. Pre-January 29, 2025 safety incidents at DCA between airplanes and helicopters, and FAA risk pattern identification, escalation, and sufficiency of policy responses;
4. Post-January 29, 2025 safety incidents at DCA between airplanes and helicopters, and FAA risk identification, escalation, and sufficiency of responses to those incidents and the January 29 crash;
5. FAA Air Traffic Controller staffing, training, and real-time responses at DCA, including on January 29; and
6. U.S. Army, federal law enforcement, and FAA interagency communication, including effectiveness of established working groups, and FAA follow-through.

While the National Transportation Safety Board is investigating the immediate actual and proximate causes of the January 29, 2025 DCA aviation incident, the Department of Transportation Inspector General has the authority to uncover broader institutional factors that contributed to this tragedy or has the potential to contribute to a future incident. Any lapses in internal accountability, interagency coordination, and safety oversight must be uncovered and addressed swiftly for the families of those lost that day, for the safety of the

flying public and residents of the National Capital Region, and for the integrity of the National Airspace System.

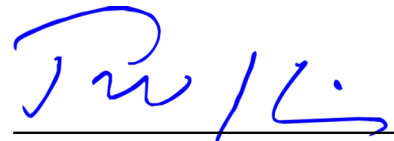
This includes examining whether issues related to safety culture, leadership focus, or institutional complacency left key risks unaddressed. The findings of this review should be made public to the greatest extent possible to ensure transparency and public trust.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



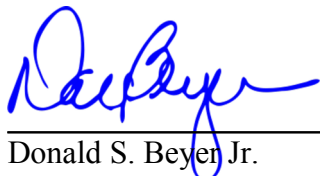
Tim Kaine
United States Senator



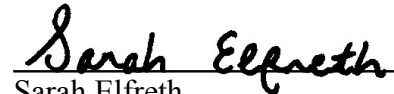
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



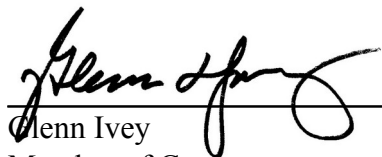
Angela Alsobrooks
United States Senator



Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



Sarah Elfreth
Member of Congress



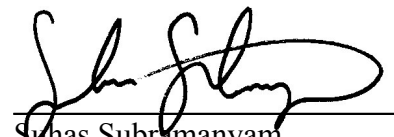
Glenn Ivey
Member of Congress



Jennifer L. McClellan
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Suhas Subramanyam
Member of Congress