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April 30, 2009

Lynne A. Osmus  
Acting Administrator  
Federal Aviation Administration  
800 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20591

Dear Administrator Osmus,

I am writing to you with respect to the incident that took place on Monday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009 where a jet normally used as Air Force One flew past New York and New Jersey for a photo opportunity in front of the Statue of Liberty. As I am sure you are aware, this incident caused a significant panic, disrupting people's workdays and causing a tremendous amount of mental stress.

It has been widely reported that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) ordered local officials, including police departments, not to alert the media or the public in advance. It has also been reported that the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey was not notified of the flight in advance.

If true, this represents a shocking lack of coordination between your office and state and local officials. It should come as no surprise that a large jet flying towards southern Manhattan in an unusual flight pattern would instill fear in some of the same residents and workers who watched the World Trade Center collapse seven and a half years ago. Disregarding the question about if this publicity shoot was even necessary, at the very least the public should have been notified well in advance. To the extent that this flight was kept secret because of concerns about the safety of the plane, such safety concerns should surely be trumped by concerns about the safety of the general public in a mass panic.

With this in mind, I request a written response to the following questions:

- Is the FAA conducting a thorough review of this incident? If so, what is the status of this review?
- If, as has been reported, the FAA specifically precluded law enforcement from sharing information about the flight with the public, who was responsible for making this decision? Is the FAA pursuing any disciplinary action against this individual? Furthermore, what was the FAA's rationale for not sharing this information with the public?

- In light of this incident, it appears that whatever procedures the FAA currently employs to notify the public about planes that are flying in an unusual or dangerous flight path are clearly inadequate. What changes in these procedures will the FAA enact to ensure that such an incident does not happen again?

Your timely response to these questions is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact my office at (202) 225-4465.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Scott Garrett". The signature is written in black ink and is centered on the page.

Scott Garrett  
Member of Congress