

disorder? Potential plane crash, that's what. If the pilot claims discrimination, well, that's not good either. We serve an affluent, educated business class. You think they'll find it politically correct to climb aboard a "bigot" airline?

Danville Director of Operations Donald Berger had the bottom line and Danville's spotless accident-free record in mind when he commented:

Small airlines face a lot of competition. It's a tough business. Our airline has an advantage because we've never had an accident. Believe me, in my position I'm well aware of what can cause accidents. Nearly 70% of airline accidents are linked to pilot error. I appreciate the pilot's feelings, but what are hurt feelings compared with an airplane full of people?

Taylor also spoke to Danville's insurance company and got this response from Atta Commercial Insurance agent Carolyn Jennings:

I watch these companies very carefully. Airline employees have routine drug and alcohol testing, extensive training, and periodic on-the-job reviews. We hold equipment and maintenance to the highest standards—to protect passengers, of course, but also to protect the airline's liability. Why shouldn't we hold employees, particularly pilots, to the same high standards? Thank goodness for blood testing, which now can screen for potentially dangerous situations. Can you imagine what would happen if a pilot with HD slipped through? If there were an accident? We would have a major insurance disaster, and the airline might be out of business.

Taylor had also consulted with a physician, Patti Hicks, who was not affiliated with the airline:

It is important for anyone who has been found to have the Huntington's disease gene to know exactly what it means. The HD gene is a bad copy of a normal gene. Scientists do not yet know what this gene normally does, nor do they know how the abnormal gene causes the disease. Scientists around the world are working to learn more about this gene so that effective treatments can be developed.

It is impossible to predict when the disease will strike and how quickly symptoms will develop. For some people, the disease can be quite severe with movement problems developing while they are still children. But in many cases, no symptoms develop until very late in life. I've heard of some people with this gene who do not have any problems until they are well into their sixties or seventies.