



## **MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD**

**Brian C. Rayner**  
**Senior Air Safety Investigator**  
**Eastern Region**

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**Date: November 3, 2024**  
**Person Contacted: Brad Zabinski – Passenger**  
**NTSB Accident Number: ERA23LA262 Mooresville, NC**

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### **Narrative:**

Mr. Zabinski was riding as a passenger in the airplane involved in the accident cited above. He was interviewed by telephone, and the following is a summary of the interview.

Mr. Zabinski said he was not a pilot but had taken some flight instruction when he was in his teens. This was his first flight in a small airplane in 30 years. Mr. Zabinski said he was 5 feet 11 inches tall and weighed 170 pounds.

“I was on vacation visiting Mr. Hunt, he did a thorough preflight briefing with seatbelts and safety equipment. He was very thorough with his preflight and explaining everything. I felt very safe. We took off from his home airport and flew to the Long Island Airport with no anomalies noted. Everything was fine.”

“We got out and spoke to an older gentleman for a moment, did another preflight, climbed aboard, and took off.”

The engine started doing something awfully weird on the initial takeoff. Quite literally, I didn’t know what happened. It happened so fast; I was visually overloaded. It all happened so fast.” Mr. Zabinski estimated the airplane was about “tree-top” height and over the water at the point where the engine began to malfunction.

Mr. Zabinski said he could not recall Mr. Hunt providing any instructions to him during the descent and before contact with the water. He said he heard Mr. Hunt speaking at that time but he was unable to discern what was being said or if it was even addressed to him.

**END OF STATEMENT**