



NEWS RELEASE

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Lawmakers Say No to Closing Dangerous Loophole in Aviation Safety *House Panel Rejects Tighter Review of Outsourced Aircraft Maintenance*

Washington, D.C. – *The following statement was issued today by Edward Wytkind, president of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD), on the House Homeland Security Committee rejecting an amendment by Rep. James Langevin (D-RI) to require greater federal review of the security of aircraft repair stations, both in the U.S. and abroad, which perform maintenance on U.S. commercial aircraft:*

"Today a majority of the House Homeland Security Committee shamefully sided with the interests of airline lobbyists and foreign businesses, at the expense of the safety and security of the flying public. It was a short-sighted and dangerous action.

Since 2003 both the Transportation Security Administration and the Federal Aviation Administration have been ignoring a clear congressional mandate, included in that year's FAA reauthorization bill, to conduct safety and security audits of contract repair stations and more closely oversee the growing amount of outsourced aircraft repair by U.S. commercial airlines.

In the nearly three years of foot-dragging by the Bush administration on this critical homeland security issue, report after report by independent watchdogs such as the U.S. Transportation Department's Inspector General have sounded alarm bells about our government's inattention to the rising amount of maintenance, most recently said to be 54 percent, that our major airlines send to third-party contractors. Many of these repair stations are scattered around the globe, often in places where safety and security oversight is lax and where workers are not required to meet the same level of training and background checks required of U.S. workers.

For the safety of the flying public, the TSA and FAA must end their dangerous and unconscionable abdication of responsibility in this critical area. Working together with the leading aircraft mechanic unions, the International Association of Machinists and the Transport Workers of America, we will not rest until our government takes the appropriate action. In an era in which the corporations that run U.S. airlines continue to scour the globe for the cheapest maintenance, strong government oversight is needed more than ever.

TTD represents 30 member unions in the aviation, rail, transit, trucking, highway, longshore, maritime and related industries. For more information, visit www.ttd.org.

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