



*A bold voice for transportation workers*

February 3, 2011

Oppose Paul Amendment Repealing Flight Attendant Workplace Safety and Health Protections

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD) and its 32 member unions, we urge you to oppose an amendment to FAA reauthorization (S. 223), offered by Senator Rand Paul (R-KY), that would leave the nation's flight attendants completely unprotected by basic occupational safety and health standards. Senator Paul's amendment would strike Section 509, thereby repealing a bipartisan safety and health provision and continuing decades of government neglect in protecting flight attendants from unsafe working conditions.

Since 1970, American workers have enjoyed the benefits and protections afforded by the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA). Unfortunately, these protections do not apply to flight attendants due to the FAA's action in 1975 to unilaterally assert jurisdiction over workplace safety for flight attendants working in aircraft cabins. Yet to date the agency has never used this authority to prescribe or enforce even the most basic safety and health standards.

In 2000, the FAA and OSHA signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) designed to establish a regulatory regime that would extend workplace protections to the aircraft cabin. While the MOU was an important development, it stalled during the last decade and never achieved its objective. As a result, today flight attendants are not covered by recognized federal standards governing sanitation, air quality, temperature and humidity levels, noise and blood borne pathogens, to name a few. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data, occupational injury and illness rates among flight attendants are historically several times greater than the rates for all private industry workers. Unless defeated, Senator Paul's ill advised amendment to strike Section 509 would force flight attendants to continue to work without the benefit of workplace safety protections afforded to most Americans.

Transportation labor urges you to reject the Paul Amendment and any other amendment that attempts to weaken Section 509, when it is brought to the floor for a vote this week. There is no legitimate reason to single out flight attendants as a workforce undeserving of the same basic workplace safety and health protections enjoyed by most employees in this country.

Please contact me or TTD Legislative Representative Mia Clarkson at 202/628-9262 if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edward Wytkind', written over a white background.

Edward Wytkind  
President

**Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO**

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Edward Wytkind, President / Larry I. Willis, Secretary-Treasurer

