



October 22, 2007

Cosponsor S. 2059, the Airline Flight Crew Technical Corrections Act

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD) and the flight crews represented by our affiliated unions, I am writing to urge you to cosponsor the Airline Flight Crew Technical Corrections Act (S. 2059). This legislation will finally address an anomaly that has prevented airline flight crews from qualifying for coverage under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

The FMLA was drafted to provide 12 weeks of unpaid leave to an employee if they work 60% of a full time schedule which comes out to approximately 1,250 hours per year. But the work schedules of pilots and flight attendants and how time on duty is calculated, results in these workers being unfairly excluded from the FMLA. Specifically, time between flights, such as overnights and layovers, is based on company scheduling requirements and needs, but does not count towards crewmember time at work. Although flight crews can spend several days a week away from home due to the nature of their jobs, all of that time does not count toward FMLA qualification.

Additionally, many airline crews are on "reserve" status, which means they must stand-by to be called for duty if others are unable to work an assigned flight. They must be ready to report at any time. While the company recognizes they are "on duty" and guarantees a set number of hours for which they will be paid each month, whether they fly or not, only their actual time working flights counts under the FMLA. This makes it much harder for them to reach the 1,250 hours, as required by the FMLA.

S. 2059 brings flight crews under the provisions of the FMLA by considering the unique calculation of work hours in the airline industry. It provides a clarification to the original legislation that makes it possible for pilots and flight attendants to qualify for family and medical leave when they have completed 60% of a full time schedule at their airline. This is an unintended problem that has denied thousands of people coverage for many years. Again, I urge you to co-sponsor S. 2059.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward Wytkind", written over a horizontal line.

Edward Wytkind
President

Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO

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