



A bold voice for transportation workers

February 16, 2011

***Please Support Hirono Amendment to Ensure Flight Attendant
Workplace Safety and Health Protections***

Dear Representative:

As the House Transportation and Infrastructure Full Committee prepares to mark-up the FAA Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2011, (H.R. 658) we urge you vote in support of an amendment offered by Representative Hirono that would provide long overdue workplace safety and health protections for flight attendants working in the aircraft cabin.

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.

Representative Hirono's amendment would require the FAA in consultation with OSHA and other stakeholders to complete work begun under the MOU; and consistent with the recommendations of the joint FAA-OSHA team, publish a new policy statement that will be issued by the FAA and placed in the Federal Register. H.R. 658 is silent on the issue of workplace health and safety protections for flight attendants, making Representative Hirono's amendment even more pertinent.

Transportation labor urges you to support the Hirono amendment when it is considered in Committee mark-up. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me directly or TTD Legislative Representative Mia Clarkson at 202/628-9262.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Edward Wytkind', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Edward Wytkind
President

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