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## **TTD Tells FAA Time to Raise the Bar on Aircraft Repair Outsourcing Safety**

WASHINGTON, DC—The Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD) today urged federal aviation regulators to start holding contract aircraft repair stations, especially foreign-based facilities performing work on U.S. aircraft, to the highest levels of safety.

In comments submitted to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) that would reform third-party repair station safety rules, TTD President Edward Wytkind told the agency that the proposal is an important step forward, but does not go far enough to achieve one level of safety.

“There is no question that this country has seen an epidemic of aircraft repair outsourcing with our air carriers now routinely shopping for lower wages and regulatory costs overseas,” said Wytkind. There are now 700 foreign repair stations certified by the FAA to work on U.S. aircraft. In 2008, major air carriers spent \$4.25 billion, or 64 percent of their total maintenance budget, on outsourced repairs.

According to the DOT Inspector General’s office, of the 71 percent of heavy maintenance that is now farmed out by U.S. airlines, 27 percent of that work goes overseas where regulations often fail to live up to the standards imposed in America.

“Clearly it makes no sense to allow U.S. carriers to outsource ever expanding work to foreign stations that are not held to the same standards and oversight as those in the U.S.,” Wytkind said. “We are especially disappointed that the proposal ignores a recent congressional mandate to end the practice that allows mechanics at foreign stations to avoid drug and alcohol testing rules that are imposed on U.S. mechanics performing the exact same work.”

There are several provisions in the NPRM that TTD supports, such as implementing new training program requirements, allowing the FAA to deny certification to repeat offenders who demonstrate a lack of responsibility in properly running a repair station, and prohibiting individuals from skirting prosecution.

TTD’s full comments can be found in [Docket No. FAA-2006-26408, Notice No. 12-03](#).

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*The Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, represents 31 member unions in the aviation, rail, transit, motor carrier, highway, longshore, maritime and related industries. For more information, visit us at [www.ttd.org](http://www.ttd.org) or on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).*