



International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers

IAM'S PRIORITIES FOR THE 2023 FAA REAUTHORIZATION ACT

The Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) funding and operating authority will expire after Sept. 30, unless Congress passes new reauthorization legislation. As the largest airline union in the U.S., the International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers (IAM) urges Congress to **pass a 2023 FAA Reauthorization Act that prioritizes labor standards and ensures airline worker safety.**

Protect Labor Standards in Aviation

The IAM urges the **Fair and Open Skies Act** to be included in the FAA reauthorization, ensuring that any authorizations issued by the Secretary of Transportation to foreign air carriers do not undermine labor rights or safety standards. The Fair and Open Skies Act combats predatory flag of convenience air carriers who seek to fly to the U.S. while operating business models predicated on undermining labor, tax, and safety laws.

This legislation would provide DOT with the authority and strength it needs to protect fair wages and working conditions for U.S. aviation workers by requiring DOT to apply a public interest test to foreign air carrier applications and requiring the consideration of key economic criteria in permitting decisions.

Prevent State Preemption to the Airline Deregulation Act

The IAM opposes any efforts to amend the **Airline Deregulation Act (ADA)** that would limit or prohibit states and localities from including airline workers in labor protections extended to other workforces.

In 1978 Congress limited ADA preemption so as not to foreclose state and local regulation of traditional areas of state concern regarding labor and employee issues as applied to aviation workers.

Set High-Quality Standards for U.S. Airline Maintenance Facilities Overseas

The IAM is urging FAA funding to also include the **Safe Aircraft Maintenance Standards Act**, which would strengthen Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) oversight of commercial airline repair facilities outside the United States.

The bill would include measures such as unannounced FAA inspections of foreign repair stations, set minimum qualifications for mechanics and other workers, including drug testing and background checks, and require air carriers to submit detailed maintenance reports to the FAA.

This legislation would make carrier facilities outside the U.S. abide by the high-quality standards that help ensure smooth and safe travel for passengers and the airline workers. The current lack of uniform regulatory standards and oversight sets an unlevel field with carriers increasingly enticed by the financial incentives to push this work overseas. This results in job losses in the U.S. and risks passenger safety.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, more than 900 aircraft maintenance and repair stations have been certified by the FAA outside the U.S., which includes countries such as China, Singapore and Brazil.

Protect Airline Workers from Passenger Violence

Given the increase in assaults on airline workers during the pandemic, it is very important to make safety a key priority in the shaping of the FAA reauthorization. This includes clarifying the FAA's authority to enforce the mandatory **Employee Assault and Prevention Response Plan**, which was included in the agency's 2018 reauthorization legislation. The measure would provide Customer Service Agents with much-needed protection from physical and verbal abuse.

While most airlines have submitted plans, the FAA does not believe they have the authority to enforce them or hold airlines who do not submit such plans accountable.

We also urge the FAA reauthorization bill to include the **Protection from Abusive Passengers Act**, which would direct the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to create and manage a program that bars passengers who are fined or convicted of serious physical violence against airline personnel from flying.

Ramp Worker Safety Call to Action

As the representative of thousands of airline ramp workers across the U.S., the IAM strongly urges the FAA reauthorization to include the establishment of a call to action safety review to study the increase in ramp worker injuries on the job and develop recommendations to make the jobs safer.

This call to action safety review would come as ramp worker injuries are increasing. There's also been recent ramp worker deaths like in April of this year, an American Airlines' worker died at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport in Austin, Texas. This was just months after a Piedmont Airlines' ground crew worker was killed while working at Alabama's Montgomery Regional Airport in December 2022.

It's apparent that safety needs to be addressed. We call on a task force with representatives of organized labor and airline management with the goal of identifying work hazards and recommendations to improve working conditions.

Focus on Cabin Air Quality

The IAM also suggests the reauthorization package to include the Cabin Air Safety Act, which would protect airline pilots, flight attendants, and passengers from toxic cabin air.

The bill directs the FAA to implement regulations regarding smoke or fume incidents on aircraft (excluding helicopters).

Requirements includes measures such as flight attendants, pilots, aircraft maintenance technicians, airport first responders, and emergency response teams to receive annual training on how to respond to incidents on aircraft; in addition to air carriers to install and operate onboard detectors and other air quality monitoring equipment situated in the air supply system to enable pilots and maintenance technicians to locate the sources of air supply contamination, including carbon monoxide.