



International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers

FAA Reauthorization Priorities Must Be Implemented Now!

As the largest airline union in North America, we applaud Congress for passing the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018 last year. The bill included several provisions that will advance aviation safety and will improve the working conditions of airline workers. Now is the time for the Department of Transportation and the FAA to implement the key safety provisions of this legislation. The first year after enactment is crucial for ensuring that the benefits to both aviation workers and the traveling public are realized.

Assaults on Customer Service Agents

Airline workers are being assaulted by angry passengers on a daily basis. Section 551 of the FAA bill addresses the troubling rise in assaults directed at airline customer service agents (CSAs) at our nation's airports. No one should be physically or verbally assaulted just because they showed up to work and performed their job. The plan Congress mandated to mitigate these instances is simple: within 90 days, commercial airlines are to develop and submit to DOT for approval a plan detailing protocols for how to deal with violent or abusive incidents directed against CSAs. The provision also requires airlines to update their training procedures to reflect the contents of their assault and response plans. Once again, DOT has not enforced this provision, placing CSAs at continued risk of being assaulted simply for reporting to work and doing their job.

Flight Crew Fatigue

The top legislative priority for our flight attendants was a provision in the FAA bill requiring a 10-hour minimum rest period for flight attendants between 14-hour duty periods. Congress agreed. Section 335 of the FAA bill requires the DOT to, within 30 days of enactment, modify the current rules governing flight attendant rest to mandate a 10-hour rest without exception. However, several months later and our flight attendants have not been granted this common-sense safety protection because the FAA is stalling. The bill also requires commercial airlines to submit to the FAA for approval a fatigue risk management plan within 90 days after enactment. To date, no plans have been submitted nor has the FAA sought to enforce this very important mandate. Forcing flight attendants to work under outdated rest rules is simply unacceptable. Congress must put pressure on the FAA to implement these rules without further delay.

Strengthen FAA Oversight of Foreign Repair Stations

The FAA has still refused to implement drug and alcohol testing program for foreign repair stations that perform safety-sensitive work on U.S. aircraft. This requirement has been in place since passage of the 2012 FAA bill and was further emphasized in the 2016 FAA Extension Act. That same 2016 bill also required the FAA to ensure that employees at foreign repair stations who perform safety-sensitive work undergo a pre-employment background check to determine that the individual is not a threat to aviation safety. To date none of these requirements have been met. If airlines want to outsource maintenance and repair work around the world, the FAA must ensure that foreign stations meet the same safety and security standards required for work done in this country.