



AFA and IAM Members Working in Solidarity to Fight Fatigue

March 8, 2016

Dear Flight Attendants:

The Association of Flight Attendants-CWA (AFA-CWA) and the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) together achieved inclusion of 10 hours minimum rest and an FAA regulated Fatigue Risk Management Plan (FRMP) in the House version of the FAA Reauthorization Bill. Our professionals in our legislative departments worked a strategy together with lawmakers and Flight Attendants called, wrote and visited the Hill to send a strong message to Congress: Flight Attendants are tired of talk. Aviation's first responders need proper rest now.

Raising this safety standard will have an immediate, direct impact on every single Flight Attendant across the U.S. aviation industry. And for the first time, airlines will be required to acknowledge the reality of Flight Attendant fatigue while Flight Attendants gain tools to recognize fatigue, report it and address operational occurrences of fatigue within the world of scheduling subject to computer "optimizers."

What we legislate, we don't have to negotiate. Improving rest, even by a minute, is worth the fight. AFA and IAM have worked with Congressman Capuano (D-MA), who introduced our amendment language, to ensure that the 10 hour rest provision in the House FAA Reauthorization Bill means from release to report. Eight hours "rest" is the current FAA requirement. Achieving ten hours minimum, equal to the flight deck, raises the floor from which we can negotiate. We know this is the right thing to do for all Flight Attendants and aviation safety.

AFA and IAM Flight Attendants have worked for decades on this issue and we've never been this close to achieving real results to combat fatigue. Don't let anyone diminish the great strides we have made. The studies are done. The results demand more rest. But many in government and even some airline industry pessimists said it wasn't possible to change duty and rest regulations. So we focused our fight on 10 hours minimum rest equal to the pilots and a FRMP. We made this our priority and we pushed and pushed until "no" became "yes." We have come this far and achieved real political momentum together.

The FAA Reauthorization Bill is must-pass legislation, currently required by March 31, 2016, although our experience shows extensions may be approved until the bill is ultimately passed. Other issues in the bill may cause continued discussion by Congress, but the fact that we have achieved our 10 hour/FRMP language in the House bill dramatically increases the likelihood that this provision will be in the final bill. It is now an adopted bi-partisan priority for health and safety.

Now, our focus turns to the Senate where introduction of the bill is expected very soon. Keep up your calls to your Senators and encourage your flying partners to do the same. Send a powerful message about the importance of fighting Flight Attendant fatigue by attending the Rally for Rest on March 16th with hundreds of Flight Attendants from across the industry. Together we will show the Senate our determination and visit all 541 Congressional offices on Capitol Hill.

This is our opportunity to immediately improve rest and implement an FAA regulated Fatigue Risk Management Plan for every single Flight Attendant. Join us in making history. Ten hours minimum rest for all Flight Attendants.

In Solidarity,

Sara Nelson
International President
Association of Flight Attendants-CWA

Sito Pantoja
International General Vice President
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers