

# AIRMAIL

NOVEMBER 2021

Happier Holidays





# IAMAW DIST 141

NOVEMBER 2021

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The IAMAW was in the House as the historic Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act is passed into law.

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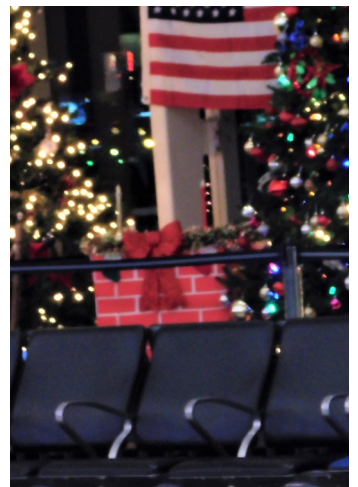
18

## **IAMAW District 141**

### **President and Directing General Chair: Mike Klemm**

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## Hawaiian Airlines Negotiations Update

22 November, 2021

Aloha sisters and brothers at Hawaiian Airlines,

Your joint District 141 & 142 negotiation committee met this past week in Las Vegas with the company. While we were unable to conclude negotiations, significant process was made. We still have a few outstanding issues remaining. We plan on meeting with our negotiating committee on December 10th to discuss and review these remaining items. After this meeting, we will discuss possible meetings with the company to conclude these negotiations.

Our goal remains the same – to prevent the need to enter Section Six negotiations and start this process all over.

Thank you for your continued support while we work to get the contract you deserve!

We'd also like to wish all of our members a Happy and Healthy Thanksgiving.

In Solidarity,

### District 141

Shannon Robello  
Stacey Williams  
Meki Pei  
Sione Olevao  
Arthur Croker  
Joy Himuro  
Ku'ulei McGuire

**Michael G. Klemm**

President & Directing General Chairman  
IAMAW, District 141

### District 142

Derek Morton  
Robert Hetchman  
David Calistro  
David Figueira

**David Supplee**

President & Directing General Chairman  
IAMAW, District 142





# MACHINISTS IN THE HOUSE AS TRILLION-DOLLAR INFRASTRUCTURE BILL IS SIGNED

15 November 2021

**The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers were present Monday as President Joe Biden signed the \$1.2 Trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act on the South Lawn of the White House. The union joined other labor groups, lawmakers, governors, and others who the White House had invited to attend the event.**

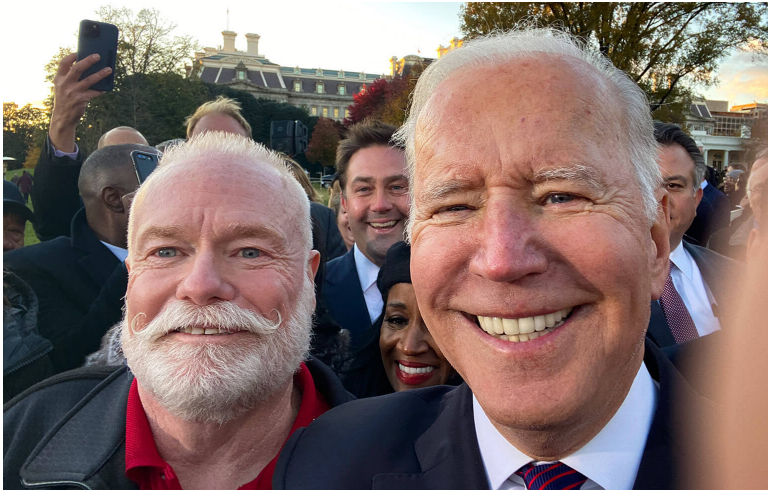
“Getting this infrastructure bill passed has been a major focus for our union,” said David Roderick, District 141 Legislative Director with the Machinists Union. “Our members have been out there making phone calls, writing letters and meeting with lawmakers, trying to make the case that now is the time to really invest in America.” Describing the experience of attending the signing ceremony as an “honor of a lifetime,” Roderick was among a delegation from the Machinists Union invited to attend the signing of the legislation, which marked the most significant single investment in transportation in at least half a century. The bill will provide \$25 billion to modernize America’s increasingly

outdated airports, where tens of thousands of Machinists Union members work. According to multiple polls, not one airport in the United States today ranks in the top ten or even the top twenty best airports for travelers, despite being the birthplace of aviation. To make matters much worse, U.S. Airports are overcrowded and increasingly unable to accommodate the number of passengers that need to use them. “The United States built modern aviation, but our airports lag far behind our competitors,” the White House said in a statement on the bill. “Modern, resilient, and sustainable port, airport, and freight infrastructure will support U.S. competitiveness

by removing bottlenecks and expediting commerce and reduce the environmental impact on neighboring communities,” the statement continued.

The bill’s investment in the nation’s rail system is also critical to Machinists Union members, boasting an extensive railroad membership. At \$17 billion, it will be the most significant investment since the creation of Amtrak in 1971. The legislation positions “rail to play a central role in our transportation and economic future,” the White House said of the bill. Economists have argued that supply chain bottlenecks are primarily to blame for the current rise in inflation and consumer prices that





**Photo Credit: President Joe Biden.**

Shortly after the signing ceremony, President Joe Biden stopped to give a personal thanks to the labor unions who helped get the Infrastructure Bill passed. Here, the President takes the cellphone from IMAW Legislative Director David Roderick to snap a selfie.

**WE: Signing ceremony for bipartisan infrastructure deal**

President Joe Biden is joined by officials for the bipartisan infrastructure deal signing ceremony.



*President Biden Signs the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act into law.*

have working Americans increasingly worried. According to Roderick, the Infrastructure bill will offer mid and long-term solutions for Americans, who are seeing spikes in the prices of everything from food to utility costs. “This bill targets virtually all of the drivers of inflation,” he said. “It will grease the entire supply chain, making it easier and cheaper to transport goods and bring them to market,” he said. Essential for the Machinists Union, according to Roderick, was that the bill would be adding tens of thousands of jobs for American workers to fill. “These are going to be union jobs,” he said. “With union paychecks.”

In addition to improving the American transportation sector, the bill will also benefit airlines in one important but often overlooked way: lowering fuel prices. Fuel costs are a significant burden for airlines, making up around 20% of overall costs. They can also be dangerously unpredictable, leading carriers like United to invest heavily in electric vehicles and updated wing designs.

The legislation will create the first-ever national network of Electric Vehicle chargers in the United States, built by American workers. The new funding will open up interstate highways to electric vehicles, including fleets of electric trucks and 18-wheelers. “The bill will provide funding for deployment of EV chargers along highway corridors to facilitate long-distance travel and within communities to provide convenient charging where people live, work, and shop,” the White House said. “Federal funding will have a particular focus on rural, disadvantaged, and hard-to-reach communities.” Additionally, the bill also funds the creation of electric school bus fleets that can replace current gasoline and propane-powered fleets. “Together, these moves will bring a permanent end to high gas prices by collapsing demand,” Roderick said.

The legislative win comes after heavy lobbying by unions throughout the pandemic – a massive mobilization that saw \$25 billion in emergency aid for airlines to retain their workforces. That assistance was followed up by a second round of payroll support worth another \$15 billion. The help allowed passenger air carriers such as United, American, and JetBlue to maintain the “payment of employee wages, salaries, and benefits.”

Machinists Union District President Mike Klemm praised the legislation and the work that the legislative department has accomplished on behalf of airline and transportation workers. “Our union is filled with an incredibly active and engaged membership,” he said, adding that Machinists Union members don’t listen to excuses well. “Our members kept this bill front and center for lawmakers, and that made a difference. This is evidenced by the fact that our union was invited to the South Lawn signing ceremony today,” he said.

***In attendance were Machinists Union members David Roderick, (Legislative Director, District 141), Josh Hartford, (General Chairman, IAM Dist. Lodge 19), Elliot Benton, (TCU Local Chairman, Amtrak), David Arouca (TCU Asst. National Legislative Director). The delegation was led by Hasan Soloman (IAMAW Legislative Director).***



Photo Credit: Tim Nestler, IAMAW Local 368

# 98% AT SPIRIT VOTE YES ON NEW CONTRACT!

5 November 2021

**Following nearly seven months of concentrated negotiations, union members at Spirit Airlines voted to approve a five-year contract with the airline by an astonishing 98% margin.**

The agreement will include retroactive pay raises, overall compensation hikes, and create new, higher-earning positions for union members to fill. The new deal will also give paid vacations to part-time workers for the first time. Previously, part-time agents at Spirit were only given unpaid time off instead of vacation time.

The higher wages will bring Spirit ramp workers significantly closer to industry-standard income levels, a long-standing goal for union members at the airline. As the largest transportation and aerospace union in North America, the International Association of Machinists and

Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) has played a leading role in establishing wage standards for gate and ticket counter agents in commercial aviation. Contracts negotiated by Machinists-represented airline workers at airlines like American, United, Hawaiian, Southwest, and others have created upwards pressure on airlines to pay their employees well.

The new Spirit Agreement creates the most significant pay increases for ground workers in the airline's history. The average wage increase is about 30% and includes retroactive payments dating back to October 24. Before the

new contract was ratified by union members at Spirit, the top wage was \$15.15 an hour. The highest pay bracket will now increase to \$23 an hour, and over the life of the agreement will rise to \$24.78.

The new contract will also provide part-time agents with sick pay and doubles the time union members can remain on sick leave and retain their seniority.

For Lead Negotiator Tony Gibson, the deal represents a victory not only for what it wins – but also for what it doesn't lose. "We're coming out of a pandemic right now, the same pandemic





*The IMAW District 141 Spirit Negotiating Committee. Bottom row, from right: Almarie Jean, Linda Germain, AGC Andrea' Myers, Chris Willis. Top row, from right: AGC & Lead Negotiator Tony Gibson, Gregory De La Cruz, and IMAW District 141 President and Directing General Chair, Mike Klemm.*

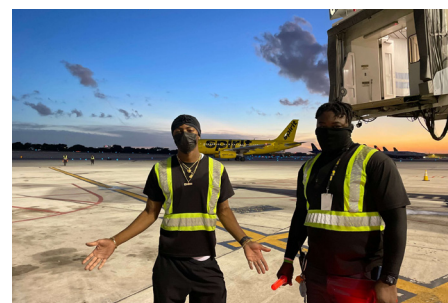
that crippled airlines for nearly a year,” Gibson said. “And, despite all that, our members at Spirit didn’t give up anything. This contract will make the Spirit workplace better – and only better. There are no concessions in this agreement.”

The agreement comes just weeks after company negotiators at Spirit had asked that talks enter mediation, a process that could have pulled the brakes on finding a deal before the holidays. Fortunately, the company and union reached a tentative agreement only two weeks later, avoiding time-consuming mediation. “Our members can stand proud in the work of the committee, which held strong for improving the economic provisions that sets a tone of respect on the job and compensation to match” said IMAW Chief of Staff Richard Johnsen of the agreement. “This proposal is the result of our strong negotiations team and it will help improve the livelihood of each and every member at Spirit Airlines.”

“The negotiating committee held strong with our demands for improved wages and other demands voiced by our members,” Airline Coordinator Tom Regan said. “These hard-working men and women have been on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This proposed labor contract rewards that dedication by each and every member who has made sure all Spirit Airlines’ passengers get to their destination safely.”

“I want to thank our IAM Negotiating Committee at Spirit for the outstanding work they’ve accomplished with this agreement. I particularly want to recognize the contributions of Local 368 members Almarie Jean, Linda Germain, Christopher Willis, and Gregory De La Cruz, who helped put this deal together,” said District 141 President and Directing General Chair Mike Klemm. “Along with District 141 Assistant General Chairs Andrea’ Myers, and Lead Negotiator Tony Gibson, this team spent countless hours away from loved ones to create a better workplace for our Spirit membership.”



*Photos courtesy of Tim Nestler*



# **MACHINISTS UNION FROM CAPITOL HILL: JETBLUE MUST REPAY WORKERS**





**The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) on Monday, Nov. 8, sent a letter to Robin Hayes, CEO of JetBlue Airways Inc., alerting him that the union will reach out to federal lawmakers in an attempt to help workers who wrongfully lost wages and benefits even as the carrier took taxpayer-funded relief as part of the CARES Act.**

16 November

“We will reach out to key federal lawmakers, inform them that JetBlue management took almost \$2 billion in federal tax-payer funds and then cut the hours, pay and benefits of hundreds, if not thousands, of JetBlue workers in potential violation of federal law. At present, you may ignore the IAM, but ignoring the questions of federal lawmakers would likely not be a good strategy,” wrote Richard Johnsen, IAM Chief of Staff to the International President.

Johnsen’s correspondence was a follow-up attempt by the IAM.

On Oct. 13, James Carlson, the IAM’s Assistant Airline Coordinator, wrote Hayes, urging him to rectify the matter.

“JetBlue Crewmembers deserve better,” Carlson wrote. “They deserve to be repaid the money you wrongly took from them last year. They deserve to have their 401k accounts increased by the exact amount that was lost due to their working hours/pay being wrongly cut.”

The IAM lobbied aggressively to make sure the airline Payroll Support Program (PSP) was included in the CARES Act.

JetBlue applied for and received taxpayer funds under the Payroll Support Program, which required airlines to maintain workers’ jobs, pay and benefits as a condition of taking the funds. In May 2020, a group of 13 U.S. Senators, led by Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), wrote to Hayes, urging the company to reverse its decision to cut hours of workers after receiving the financial assistance of the CARES Act.

“Your decision to cut employee hours is inconsistent with congressional intent and is a blatant and potentially illegal effort to skirt your requirements to keep workers on payroll, and you should reverse this policy immediately,” the senators wrote.

The IAM is actively trying to organize JetBlue’s Ground Operations (GO) Crewmembers.

Johnsen’s letter to Hayes pointed out some falsehoods in the company’s messages to its workers, many of which are an attempt to thwart union representation.

“The truth is that JetBlue management will do everything in its power to coerce GO Crewmembers against forming a union. JetBlue management knows that by unionizing GO Crewmembers will be able to gain the power needed to secure a legally binding contract that they deserve, which recognizes their value to JetBlue Airways,” Johnsen wrote. “JetBlue management also knows it will lose the power to dictate every aspect of GO Crewmembers working lives if these brave, dedicated workers join a union.”

**T**he Payroll Support Program, under Division A, Title IV, Subtitle B of the CARES Act, provided payroll support to passenger air carriers for the continuing payment of employee wages, salaries, and benefits through the pandemic. This money was given to airlines based on how much they spent on total labor costs in 2019. JetBlue executives took nearly \$2 billion, and agreed to keep pay, staffing levels and benefits at 2019 levels.

However, soon after taking the money, JetBlue cut the hours, removed premium-pay positions, and reduced benefits for non-union Ground Ops Crewmembers. This meant that the amount of PSP funding the airline got was much more than it needed, allowing executives to pocket the difference.

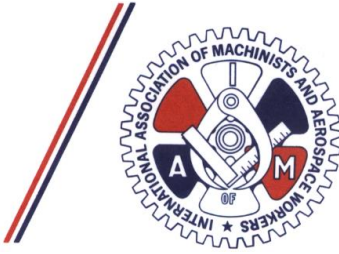
Now, the Machinists Union is asking the same lawmakers who wrote the PSP provisions into the CARES Act to review the actions of JetBlue executives and determine if any violations have taken place.



**The Machinists Non Partisan Political League seeks to advance public policy that benefits airline and aerospace workers. To support the work of the MNPL, please consider recurring, automatic donations of any amount today. Scan below to start supporting this important work.**



**International  
Association of  
Machinists and  
Aerospace Workers**



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Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772-2687

Area Code 301  
967-4500



November 8, 2021

Robin Hayes, CEO JetBlue Airways Inc.  
27-01 Queens Plaza North  
Long Island City, NY 11101

CEO Hayes,

As expected, you did not respond to a letter sent to you on October 11, 2021. Instead, you had Alex Battaglia, JetBlue Head of Airports and System Operations, respond for you. In the aforementioned letter, a member of my staff requested that you reimburse JetBlue employees who wrongly had their hours, pay and benefits cut last year after JetBlue management took approximately \$2 billion in tax-payer funded grants and loans under the Payroll Support Program (PSP) component of the CARES Act.

For this reason, the IAM will mobilize our Legislative Department. We will reach out to key federal lawmakers, inform them that JetBlue management took almost \$2 billion in federal tax-payer funds and then cut the hours, pay and benefits of hundreds, if not thousands, of JetBlue workers in potential violation of federal law. At present, you may ignore the IAM, but ignoring the questions of federal lawmakers would likely not be a good strategy.

Mr. Battaglia's response, both to the IAM and GO Crewmembers, contained some very questionable claims. Besides, in our opinion, wrongly claiming that JetBlue was in compliance with federal mandates concerning accepting PSP funds, he also appeared to kick off JetBlue's anti-workplace democracy campaign by attempting to influence GO Crewmember's decision to request a union representation election take place.

Besides patting himself on the back for taking basic pandemic safety measures, like installing hand sanitizer stations and Plexiglas in gate areas and supplying surgical masks, Mr. Battaglia also took the time to spew the typical misrepresentations and falsehoods associated with attempting to influence and coerce JetBlue workers from exercising their right to form a union and gain collective bargaining rights.

Among the falsehoods and misrepresentations was Battaglia's claim that JetBlue management "live[d] up to its no furlough promise". Mr. Battaglia should know that because JetBlue management took billions of dollars in federal PSP funds, JetBlue was **PROHIBITED BY LAW** from furloughing any workers. To take credit for this is a clear attempt to deceive GO Crewmembers that it was the kindness JetBlue management that was the reason that no JetBlue



workers were furloughed. No JetBlue workers were laid off, as you know, because of the protections provided by under the CARES Act. A law, by the way, that was enacted due to the activism of IAM members and the labor movement as a whole.

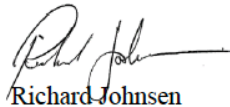
Mr. Battaglia also claimed that "if a union were elected the Airports Compensation Advisory Team (ACAT) review would stop." That would only be true if JetBlue management decided to stop the ACAT review. CEO Hayes, the IAM, as we have said before, demands that you raise the wages of GO Crewmembers right now. What's to review? JetBlue just reported a Q3 profit of \$190 million. GO Crewmembers deserve exactly what was promised in 2019 and then some. They deserve significant improvements to their benefits and working conditions, as well. The IAM demands that be done now, so any assertion that electing a union would halt the process is another sad attempt to deceive JetBlue GO Crewmembers.

JetBlue GO Crewmembers deserve so much more than they are receiving. They deserve the respect to negotiate and vote on their terms of employment.

The truth is that JetBlue management will do everything in its power to coerce GO Crewmembers against forming a union. JetBlue management knows that by unionizing GO Crewmembers will be able to gain the power needed to secure a legally binding contract that they deserve, which recognizes their value to JetBlue Airways. JetBlue management also knows it will lose the power to dictate every aspect of GO Crewmembers working lives if these brave, dedicated workers join a union.

Lastly, the IAM will act to defend GO Crewmembers' federal right to join a union and will not tolerate JetBlue management's interference in the exercise of such rights.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Johnsen", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Richard Johnsen  
Chief of Staff to the International President,  
Transportation,  
International Association of Machinists and  
Aerospace Workers, AFL-CIO



Helping Hands

November

IAMAW 141 EAP

## NOVEMBER HELPING HANDS: MANAGING COVID DEPRESSION



Bryan Hutchinson, M.S.  
EAP Director  
[bhutchinson@iam141.org](mailto:bhutchinson@iam141.org)  
Cell: 303-229-5117

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### EAP Peer Volunteers:

This month we address Covid depression. There are 5 ways to help with depression during this difficult time- all good on their own, and very effective when done together. Covid fatigue is a very real consequence of what all of us are experiencing. The fatigue results in depression. If it isn't recognized it can be debilitating. Anxiety and depression are rising. Other indicators are beginning to show we have unrecognized illness – for example, liver disease and the need for liver transplants has risen significantly in just the last three months. This may be an indicator that people have been drinking more in the isolation of Covid than we realized. Drinking is a leading cause of depression.

As always, thank you for taking such good care of your co-workers. The holidays are coming up and it appears people will be able to celebrate together after two years of being apart. Let's hope for the best!

Bryan,  
Bryan Hutchinson, M.S.

### How Can We Help You?

#### The District 141 Employee Assistance

Program can quickly and confidentially connect you to counseling, crisis intervention, and other wellbeing services.

The Machinists and Aerospace Union partners with hundreds of deeply caring and trained professionals who can help guide you through a wide range of challenges.

EAP services are free, confidential and compassionate.





# HELPING HANDS



## How to Deal with Depression During Covid

(Excerpts from Psychology Today)

### 1. Mind Your Thoughts

Our minds are constantly telling us stories. When we're feeling down, the stories tend to be negative:

- *Nothing ever works out in my life.*
- *I'm such a failure.*
- *This is hopeless.*
- *People would be better off without me.*

We need to remind ourselves that these thoughts are creations of the mind. There are alternative stories that aren't so disheartening and are more accurate. Maybe we've had some failure in our lives... **and** a lot of success. Some things don't work out... but other things do.

Action Step: Start to notice the thoughts you're having, especially when your mood takes a nosedive. What went through your mind just before? What did you tell yourself? And then write it down (that part is important). When we can capture these stories, we're in a better position to start to question them, and to drain their power.



### 2. Move Your Body

Physical movement is as effective as antidepressant medication, has many positive side effects, and is free! Research has shown that walking, jogging, running, weightlifting, and other forms of exercise can reduce depression. Any movement is better than none. It may be helpful not to think of it as "exercise," which often sounds like a chore—something you "should do" but don't want to. Instead, ask yourself what type of movement your body is craving. Is it walking with a friend? Dancing in your kitchen? An online yoga video in your living room? Find any way to move the body, especially in ways that are fun. In addition to the mood boost, it's also helpful for sleep.

Action Step: Plan to increase your movement today. Make it small and make it doable. A five-minute walk around the block is a good first step (pun sort of intended).

### 3. Consecrate Your Sleep

There's a close connection between sleep and depression. Poor sleep can contribute to depression. And while we can't guarantee sound sleep every night, there are things we can do to sleep more soundly.

Treat sleep like it's sacred. Set aside a time for winding down at the end of the day as a buffer before bedtime.

Stop working. Put screens away. Take 30 to 60 minutes to read, enjoy low-key conversation, do bedtime yoga, or anything else you find calming.

Other specific practices that make for healthy sleep include:

- Keep a consistent bedtime and wake-up time. Aim to stick to this schedule even after a poor night's sleep.



• Avoid daytime naps. Sleeping in the day tends to interfere with solid sleep at night. If you do nap, keep it short, and do it earlier in the day.

• Get out of bed if you're not able to sleep. Staying in bed when we're awake and frustrated can cause us to associate the bed with being awake and stressed out. Do something relaxing like reading for a half-hour or so before going back to bed.

• Beware of short-term "sleep aids." Chemicals like alcohol may knock you out, but they don't provide high-quality sleep. And in the long run, they can create an unhealthy dependence.

Action Step: Take some time to plan an enjoyable winding-down routine

that will prepare you for sleep.

#### 4. *Be with People*

Good relationships are antidepressants. Aim to spend more time with those you love, whether in person (if possible), or by phone or video conference. Be creative if need be—go for a walk with a friend. Watch a movie “together” with someone, even if you’re not in the same location. And as hard as it might be, look for ways to improve others’ lives—yes, even when you’re struggling. Look for any opportunity to show kindness to people in your life. Research shows that helping others is a powerful mood enhancer.

Action Step: Text a friend or family member to set up a time to talk, whether in person, by phone, or by video. Be sure to ask how they’re doing.

#### 5. *Be Open to the Present*

Step into the moment, exactly where you are. Depression is made worse when we’re focused on the future, imagining we’ll always feel this way and that things will never get better. There are countless ways to practice presence, including meditation. Being present is about coming home to yourself because you only exist in the present: your body, your feelings, your thought processes. We can find our spirits there, too—the deepest parts of ourselves that are always with us, and that are undiminished by any challenges we’re facing. That’s where we find our strength and resolve to keep facing each moment of our lives.

Action Step: When you wake up in the morning, take five calm, deliberate breaths, slowing down the exhale. Notice how things are for you—thoughts, feelings, physical sensations. Begin your day from a grounded place of connection with yourself.

More than anything, be good to yourself—now and always. These are stressful times. This is hard. None of us have done this before. And we’re doing the best we can to figure things out. Whatever you do, don’t give up on yourself. You’re worth more than you can imagine. And there’s more strength in you than you know, the strength to face the challenges of each day.

***Your EAP Representative (listed below) can help you find the most appropriate services for your situation***

## IAM Peer Employee Assistance Program



The heart and soul of the District 141 Employee Assistance Program is the local lodge EAP peer coordinator. These dedicated men and women volunteer their personal time to assist other union members and their families who are experiencing personal difficulties. EAP peer coordinators do not make clinical diagnoses or clinical evaluations, however, they are trained to make a basic assessment of your situation and refer you to an appropriate resource for a more detailed evaluation. EAP peer coordinators will follow up to ensure you have been able to access services that addressed the difficulty you were experiencing.

#### IAM EAP Airline Chairmen

United Airlines Tony Rodriguez, 303-525-3334

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American Airlines Chris Davis: 704-572-4859,

E-mail: [chrisx1959@yahoo.com](mailto:chrisx1959@yahoo.com)



#### Depression is Different

Depression is a common but serious mood disorder. It causes severe symptoms that affect how you feel, think, and handle daily activities, such as sleeping, eating, or working. Learn more about depression:

↳ <https://go.usa.gov/xds5Z>  
#shareNIMH





# MACHINISTS UNION COMMUNICATIONS WINS LABOR JOURNALISM AWARDS

**The IAM Communications Department has been recognized as one of the best communications teams in the labor movement by winning three awards in the International Labor Communications Association's 2021 Labor Media Contest.**

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**T**he annual ILCA Labor Media Awards Contest recognizes excellence among union publications, websites, film, video, and other media. It is the first and largest competition exclusively for labor journalists. The 2021 winners represent the best work in labor communications and promote the highest standards of labor journalism during the 2020 calendar year.

The IAM Communications Department won awards from the IAM Journal, earned media and in video production.

ILCA's Saul Miller award highlights writing related to some of the key activities of unions: organizing, collective bargaining and political action. The awards honor the late Saul Miller, a director of the AFL-CIO Department of Information and a founder of ILCA.

## **First Place**

Writing – Saul Miller Awards – Collective Bargaining

**Local S6 Built is Best Built  
Andrew Hounshell**

## **Second Place**

Best Use of Earned Media

**IAM Local S6 Strike  
Jonathan Battaglia and Hasan  
Solomon**

## **Second Place**

Electronic Media – Best Longform Video

**Broken Promise: Harley-Davidson in  
Missouri  
Valana Cochran and Deirdre  
Kaniewski**



## AIRLINE AND RAIL MEMBERS FIGHT THOUGH PANDEMIC, UNDERSTAFFING TO KEEP AMERICA MOVING

18 November 2021

*This story first appeared on GOIAM.org >*

**The IAM Transportation Department includes more than 160,000 active and retired members in the airline and rail industries, making it the largest airline union in North America. Its members have always been on the front lines, moving travelers and goods across the world, but the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have brought upon added stress, responsibilities and, in some cases, confrontations with unruly passengers.**

"Our transportation membership in the airline and railroad industries have been nothing short of heroes during these difficult times," said Richard Johnsen, Chief of Staff to the International President and a former United Airlines mechanic. "The Transportation Department is engaged at the local, district and international level to negotiate strong contracts, keep our members safe on the job and continue to fight for and win much-needed relief for our members."

Since the start of the pandemic, and thanks to the IAM's activism, U.S. airlines have received \$54 billion in federal aid to help cover payroll expenses. In return, carriers were prohibited from furloughing or laying off workers. However, they were

allowed to persuade tens of thousands of employees to take buyouts, early retirement or leaves of absence.

The number of people flying daily in the U.S. is getting closer to pre-pandemic levels, even though business and international travel have been slow to resume. Airlines and airports have struggled to accommodate this influx through proper staffing, which has resulted in longer customer service wait times, significant flight delays and sudden cancellations. In some cities, airport concession stands and restaurants aren't fully staffed or open, leaving stranded travelers with fewer options for food and beverages, thereby increasing passenger irritability.

"Airlines were not prepared for the

number of passengers traveling so soon after restrictions were lifted," said Southwest

Customer Service Agent Nina Caldwell, a Local 846 (District 142) member.

Passengers whose flights aren't canceled or delayed still risk being on board with troublesome passengers. Airlines have reported more than 3,200 incidents of unruly passengers in 2021. Most involve people refusing to wear masks, as required by the federal government.

The passengers who have refused to put a mask on have left many airline personnel, especially customer service agents and flight attendants, in the precarious position of enforcing this mandate.

"I had an incident where I asked a lady if she had a mask and she proceeded to get in my face, not wearing a mask, yelling at me that she didn't need to wear a mask and asking me what am I going to do about it," said Caldwell. "She said she would rather die than wear a mask. Luckily, the airport police walked by and she backed up and put on her mask. After the police left, she came back, stood in front of me and stared me down."

"Due to poor scheduling and understaffing throughout airport operations and the added responsibility of enforcing the mask mandate, several flight attendants had multiple encounters with unruly passengers," said

Lisa Ferm, a CommutAir Flight Attendant and Local 2339N (District 142) member. "Many have been threatened and felt unsafe, but each time me and my coworkers have been able to de-escalate the situation. Because of our IAM contract with CommutAir, the company has addressed these occurrences and provided assistance.

I do feel grateful to a part of the IAM because I know our representatives have been going above and beyond fighting to protect us."

Understaffing has also caused issues for other IAM-represented groups like Fleet Service Agents.





*Nina Caldwell (Southwest Airlines)  
IAM Member, Local 846 (District 142)*

Larry Reeves, an American Airlines Fleet Service Agent and Local 1776 president, says understaffing has also caused problems for Fleet Service workers, but “because of our ironclad IAM contract and lobbying done by our legislative team, there was a recent hiring surge, bringing 50 new part-timers into the fold in Philadelphia.”

“These new hires will help alleviate some of our workload issues and, hopefully, get our workforce to the point where we can provide the service to our passengers that they deserve,” said Reeves.

The IAM has been urging lawmakers and other federal officials to step up measures to protect the safety of airline workers in recent months. That includes Richard Johnsen, Chief of Staff to the International President, taking part in the Aviation Labor Recovery Roundtable call with FAA Administrator Steve Dickson and U.S. Transportation Department Deputy Secretary Polly Trottenberg.

Johnsen then urged participants on the call to share the union’s urgency to assure airlines properly staff positions, adding that “airlines were granted

billions of dollars in federal relief from this administration to address these problems, and they must act now.”

#### How understaffing is affecting the Precision Rail

IAM District 19 represents 11,000 active Machinists across the country, including every Class 1, commuter railroad, Amtrak and many others. The Transportation Communications Union (TCU/IAM) also represents tens of thousands of railroad members.

Our members primarily maintain and repair locomotives and track maintenance equipment, both in shop and on the line of road. They also perform complete overhauls of locomotives and assemblies and sub-assemblies used in all aspects of railroading.

A massive operational change is currently upending the railroad industry by threatening the jobs, health and safety of our members. It is also significantly impacting the massive freight network they help operate. That operational change is called “Precision Scheduled Railroading,” or PSR.

PSR is a process to minimize the

amount of times a train would be required to stop between destinations. In order to accomplish this, the railroads are creating longer trains, and in some instances, adding an additional 3,000 to 5,000 feet to their existing train length. “PSR, as currently being implemented, is not safe or effective, and Congress should exercise its oversight to investigate,” said Andrew Sandberg, IAM District 19 Assistant to the President/Directing General Chairman Rail, who represented the IAM with testimony to Congress. “We are concerned that current PSR schemes are detrimental to the long-term outlook of the rail industry, putting short-term gains ahead of long-term success, furloughing thousands while downgrading safety.”

The Machinists Union supports efforts to efficiently operate our nation’s railroads. We want our employers to be profitable, as profits leads to raises and quality benefits for our members.

However, PSR is designed to increase short-term profits for shareholders, at any cost. What was once scorned upon by industry professionals and executives is now being forced on the industry by Wall



*Larry Reeves (American Airlines)  
President, IAM Local 1776*



Street investors.

The IAM's main concerns are with meeting strict deadlines at all costs and reducing headcounts to deliver short-term savings to shareholders.

After implementation of PSR, understaffing and lay-offs have become all too familiar, with Machinists Union members being asked by management to do other craft jobs almost daily. Management at railroads such as Norfolk Southern, Union Pacific and CSX Transportation expect our members to complete their normal tasks in the same timeframe as before, even though management are now asking members to do the tasks of the Pipefitters, Boilermakers, Carmen and utility workers as well.

"This environment is very unsafe as it creates an atmosphere of 'hurry up and rush' just to get a number out the door," said Sandberg.

The atmosphere on the railroad is increasingly one of hostility towards reporting any safety violations. For

example, CSX Transportation's accident rate has increased despite the fact that the rate of train accidents for all Class 1 railroads nationwide is decreasing. Since 2013, the national rate has decreased about 6%, while CSX's rate has increased 59%.

Congress and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) must apply greater scrutiny to these Precision Scheduled Railroading practices.

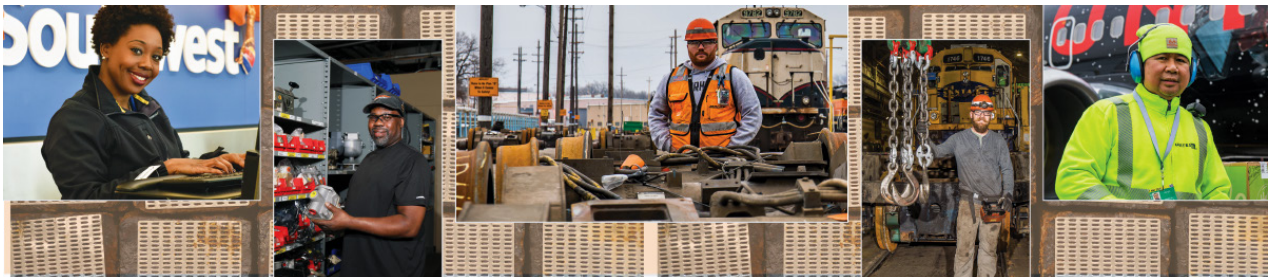
"Our members report being overworked, stressed, and scared," said Derrick Battle, District 19 General Chairman. "They talk about drastic cuts to their shops while those remaining are being asked to perform double or triple the work compared to the pre-PSR era. Our members also cite increased safety violations, managers threatening job cuts if deadlines aren't met and being forced to ignore basic safety procedures."

A recent survey of members asked them to rate overall safety on a scale of 1-10, before and after PSR implementation. The results showed that before the PSR rail safety received

an average score of 6.9 while after PSR implementation rail safety received an average score of 2.6.

"Congress and the Federal Railroad Administration must apply greater scrutiny to these Precision Scheduled Railroading practices," added Sandberg. "It's a business model loathed by workers, railroads, customers and communities. All the PSR does is enrich rent-seeking Wall Street investors, no matter the cost or disruption to the lives of our members, and the commercial transportation market they'll destroy in the process."

"The Transportation Department is committed to stand hand in hand and side by side with our members to fight any challenge that may arise in the airline and railroad industries," said IAM Transportation Coordinator Edison Fraser.





# Thank You Veterans

## From the Machinists and Aerospace Union



## VETERANS DAY MESSAGE FROM THE MACHINISTS UNION

11 November 2021



*Robert Martinez, Jr. is the International President of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers union. A former aircraft assembler at Lockheed Martin's facility in Fort Worth, Martinez knows personally how vital service members are to this nation.*

### Richard Johnsen

**IAMAW Chief of Staff to the International President**

Today is a day we all get a chance to honor those who served. So many IAM Transportation members have bravely defended our nation in the armed forces. Their service allows all of us to enjoy so many freedoms. Like the military, transportation careers are made up of individuals who form a team to accomplish the task at hand. Our union is fortunate that so many veterans choose to be a part of the IAM family.

On Veterans Day and every day, please take some time to say thank you to a fellow IAM member who has served in the military. Their bravery has contributed significantly to the transportation industry and our great union.

### Mike Klemm,

**IAMAW District 141 President & Directing General Chair**

The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers is the largest union of defense and aerospace workers in the world, meaning our commitment to military service members is a fundamental part of who we are as a union.

On this Veterans Day, I ask everyone to take some time with friends and family members who have served. Listen to their stories. Try to learn from the example that they have set. Let them know that their service is inspirational to you and this nation.

If you are one of the thousands of IAMAW Members who have worn this nation's uniform, I want to thank you for your service personally. Know that this entire union stands behind you, from our frontline membership to our International President.

We take our commitments to you seriously. Not just on Veterans Day, but every day of the year. Whether it's building, maintaining, or servicing the vital hardware that helps keep our nation safe – or working to keep our transportation grid flowing smoothly. Veterans at IAMAW workplaces are the highest-paid and most respected workers in their classifications.

As a union, we champion calls to expand veterans' benefits eligibility and improvements at the VA. We led efforts to protect crucial programs such as the F-35 fighter jet program and "Buy American" rules for renewed investments in our nation's infrastructure. These efforts have provided veterans with high-paying and secure jobs, and you have my word that we will continue to uphold this critical work on your behalf.

So again, it is an absolute honor to wish our nations' men and women in uniform a happy Veterans Day.



# 141 Report

IAM District Lodge 141 Report with Host Dave Lehive is a weekly podcast featuring Machinist Union Members and Allies of the Labor Movement. Our Video report airs every Friday at 2:00 PM EST (1:00 CST) on Facebook and Youtube and is also on Spotify.



## 141 REPORT: HOLIDAY STRESS AND DEPRESSION – EAP CAN HELP

26 November 2021



We speak with the 141 South Central EAP Regional Rep Belinda Hawkins to discuss some of the issues our members are facing during the holiday season. The Machinists Union Employee Assistance Program provides free, confidential and compassionate help for union members. If you need help, please visit the EAP section on the IAM141.org website at [iam141.org/141eap](http://iam141.org/141eap).



## 141 REPORT: FOURTH GENERATION AIRLINE WORKER AND UNION LEADER, JENNIFER CARLSON

19 November 2021



Jennifer Carlson, a 4th Generation Airline worker based in San Antonio, describes her family history and her current role at this important Line station. Sister Jennifer represents about 100 IAM members and talks about the importance of completing the UA Contract survey.



## 141 REPORT: PHILADELPHIA IS A UNION TOWN

12 November 2021



Dave sits down with 4 leaders from the American Airlines Grievance committee who represent 1400 Fleet Service Brothers and Sisters at Philadelphia International Airport. Chairman Derrick Monk, Committee members Maria Davis, Jonathan Ortiz, and Terrence “Chooch” Murray brief the viewers about the large union group they look after.





## ORGANIZING AND MEMBERSHIP INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MACHINISTS AND AEROSPACE WORKERS

# MYTHBUSTER: UNION DUES

As we make progress towards filing for a union election by signing a-cards, jetBlue management will begin to amp up its misinformation campaign to influence us to not form a union, and they will undoubtedly put out misleading information about union dues.

**MYTH:** Once we vote in a union, we will have to start paying union dues.

**FACT:** Dues are only paid when we—jetBlue GO Crewmembers—vote to approve a legally binding contract. **NOT ONE PENNY OF DUES MONEY IS PAID UNTIL THEN.** And, being a newly unionized group with the IAM, we **WILL NOT** pay any “initiation fees.” Those are waived.

**HAVING UNION REPRESENTATION DOESN'T COST, IT PAYS.** That's because we will never vote in a contract that is less than what we currently have, and we will never vote in a contract that doesn't far outweigh what we pay in union dues.

Just ask any current IAM-represented airline worker. Not only have they received pay increases throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, but they've also received increases to their benefits and improvement to their working conditions.

Those are the facts.

Remember, **IF WE ARE NOT AT THE TABLE, WE ARE ON THE MENU!**

**SIGN YOUR A-CARD TODAY, SO WE CAN FINALLY VOTE!**

For more info on the campaign, or to request an a-card, scan the QR code.





## \$7 for the Cause.

Sign up for recurring donations of just \$7 for a chance to win a Union Proud, Union Made, Made in the USA MNPL T-Shirt.

