

THE JOURNAL OF DISTRICT 141 OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MACHINISTS & AEROSPACE WORKERS

# AIRMAIL

J O U R N A L

September 2022

**The Convention | JetBlue Union Vote | Legislative Wins**





13 September 2022

## **IAM 141, United Meet in DC to Discuss Path Forward**

Last week, the principal negotiators from the IAM and United Airlines met in Washington DC to discuss the path forward after negotiations stalled in late July over the critical issues of job security and compensation.

The IAM once again conveyed to the Company that their current positions on wages and job security, the top two priorities IAM members identified, are still unacceptable. Both sides did engage in discussions centered on job security and wages, which were somewhat productive.

The full IAM 141 Negotiating Committee will review and analyze the Company's latest proposals this month. When that assessment is done, we will report back to the membership.

Future negotiation dates will be communicated to the membership when they are scheduled.

In Solidarity,

### **Your Negotiating Committee**

Olu Ajetomobi  
Joe Bartz  
Victor Hernandez  
Barb Martin  
Andrea' Myers  
Terry Stansbury  
Faysal Silwany  
Erik Stenberg  
Sue Weisner

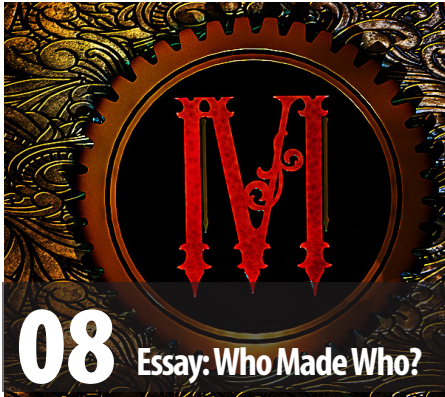
### **Michael G. Klemm**

President and Directing General  
Chair, District 141, International  
Association of Machinists and  
Aerospace Workers



The Journal of District 141 of the International Association of Machinist & Aerospace Workers

# AIRMAIL

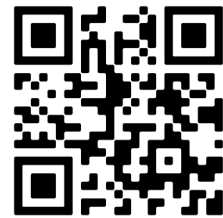


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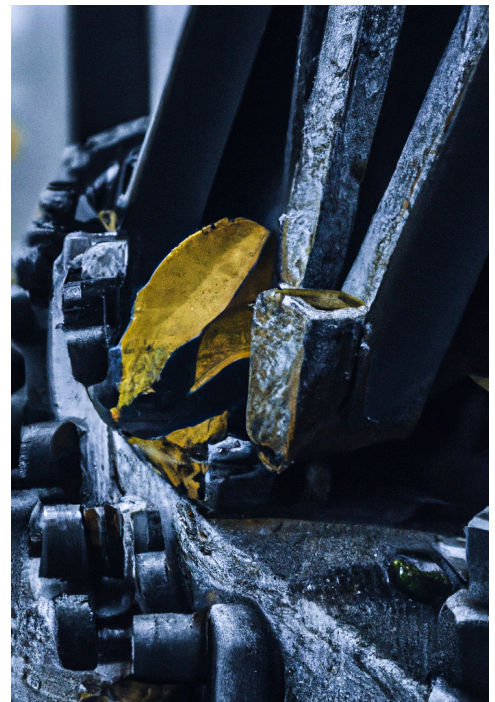
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*"Piedmont A319 N744P Parked And Offloading." Image by Jaime Jimenez.*









"Caught Him Right Before the Turn," image by Victor Gutierrez.

"Airbus A321 awaiting taxi introductions" image by Jaime Jimenez.







ORD Sunset. Image by Dan Nano.

"Larry Yoder, Hector Rivas-Gonzalez, & Paul Antignolo fill the aircraft's water at sunrise. Reno, Nevada (RNO). 10/12/21" Image by Angela Christensen.







# A DIATRIBE ON THE INTRINSIC VALUE OF WEAK MANAGEMENT





*If you stop to think about it, even for a second, the idea of democratic power is incredibly radical. Don't believe me? Then let's do a thought experiment. Let's suppose we had democratic power to make binding decisions as a group. Suppose we could, as regular citizens, make decisions on where to build roads, bridges, airports, and entire cities. Suppose we had the power to collectively determine who would be trusted to have authority over us, who could police us, and who could make the rules that we would follow.*

*Sounds pretty standard, right? Then, let's make this a little more complicated. Let's suppose that we had the same democratic powers that we are trusted to run a civilization with and imagine that we had those same abilities at work. Imagine that we voted on what our wages would be. Imagine if we, as workers, regularly met to decide which supervisors we would have and what shifts we would work. Or even how many days we would work each week. Imagine if prospective CEO's campaigned for re-election in company breakrooms, slapping backs and making promises to employees for their votes.*

Suddenly, the radicalism that democracy requires comes into sharper focus. We, as people, are regularly conditioned to think of ourselves as unworthy of authority. And our "Superiors" are naturally expected to prevent us from making craven mistakes or destabilizing decisions

based on narrow self-interest. We don't trust ourselves, but we trust each other even less. Surely, if everyone could set the rules, "people" would take advantage of the situation and try to take too much for themselves, leaving everyone else to pick

up the pieces of a failed system of Free-For-Allism. Allow employees to set their wages; indeed, they would demand a ruinous fortune that would bankrupt a company. Let them set their schedules, and they would never work. These assumptions are baked into an innate class inferiority complex exploited by those who would love to position themselves as elites.

But what if just the opposite is true? What if, when everyone sets the rules, the rules work for everyone? What if managers were just as likely to make greedy, self-interested decisions without the self-correcting machinery that guides democratic action? More importantly, why are we trusted with maintaining our very civilization through democratic institutions - but can't be trusted with them at work? Why can we vote for President and not the CEO?

The answer may lie in two assumptions. One, the decline of unionism has made the con-

cept of democracy in the workplace something most Americans have never experienced. And second, the Manager Class has sold us a narrative that places them firmly in control of the workplace. That narrative presupposes that the average worker creates less value for the company and is too unlettered to be trusted with the authority of self-management. How well does this narrative survive real scrutiny, however? Managers may be more expensive, less efficient, have fewer safeguards, and are just as prone to costly mistakes.

Most managers try to do a good job. The problem is not with them. The problem is with a top-heavy management model that makes organizations inefficient and costly. A hierarchy of managers creates a lot of overhead. As an organization grows, management costs rise in absolute and relative terms. For example, a small restaurant might have one Manager overseeing 20 employees. Still, if it grows to several locations and hundreds of employees, it will need to add more managers to the rosters. Eventually, the number of managers will rise so high that they need to be managed by another layer of managers.

And so on, until the restaurant is no longer

BY **ERIC PRICE**



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## DIATRIBE: GIVE POWER TO FRONT LINE WORKERS

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in the food service industry but has become a restaurant management company.

There will be hundreds of members of management in a company of any size. Companies will hire supervisors to oversee hourly workers, Managers to oversee the supervisors. The company will employ managers for human resources, accounting, and training. Department Heads will oversee these managers, who will answer to Directors. Vice Presidents will oversee the Directors, and Presidents will oversee the Vice Presidents. And, each new layer of management is more expensive than the last.

And they also become increasingly prone to making even more expensive mistakes for a company than their salaries. The fact is, the more "powerful" the Manager, the more likely they are to be utterly clueless about the nature of a company's work. In rigidly hierarchical systems, "power" tends to be determined by characteristics unrelated to the job, such as salary, position, title, and even where a particular manager's office is located or whether or not they can work remotely. None of which means they know the real-world working conditions at the company. In other words, power is too often confused with prestige. And neither of these things are relevant to company business unless the company is in business to provide professional advancement that has little bearing on profits.

And, with "Power" (i.e., "Prestige") calling the shots, it is easy for humble, self-doubting expertise and gritty real-world experience to get squeezed out.

Second, rigid management hierarchy leads to large-scale, bad decisions from charismatic, vainglorious, but naive bullies.

As decisions get bigger, fewer people can challenge the decision-maker. These managers are typically very eloquent, forceful personalities that instill great confidence in their leadership abilities. (Whether or not they actually know what they're doing.) They often have an innate power to hush second-guessers before the second-guessing can even begin.

The most powerful managers with-

in an organization are usually the most hubristic, the most short-sighted, and the least likely to welcome crosschecking. The highest-ranking managers are the ones who are furthest from frontline realities. And, they are the most capable of selling their ideas to overawed underlings and overlings alike.

They operate within an organization on a grand scale. Nobody tells them they're wrong. They are clueless and out of touch, despite an unmatched ability to present themselves as dynamic, virile "innovators and disruptors." This class of employees is likely to make a single, uninformed decision that can destroy an entire company. There is virtually no scenario where one of them does not eventually do something that grievously

move.

Second, managers often impede decision-making out of a desire to show their authority. Third, when power is concentrated in a single person, that person's bias can distort decisions. Finally, there is the cost of tyranny- the problem isn't the occasional control freak but the hierarchical structure that systematically disempowers lower-level employees. For example, as a customer, you can be trusted to spend \$200,000 on a new home, but as a frontline employee, you probably wouldn't be trusted to authorize a work-from-home schedule with that new house. Narrow an individual's scope of authority, and you shrink the incentive to actualize company improvements.

Regardless of the business model in question, managers are pointless unless they have the power to make sweeping, unilateral (or near-unilateral) decisions that carry the potential for heavy consequences if in case of failure. Regardless of one's view of the proper role of leadership within an organization, management will always be the employee group least likely to understand the operation fully; therefore, the most likely to make mistakes based on that ignorance that can cause lasting harm to the company.

## **RIGID MANAGEMENT HIERARCHY LEADS TO LARGE-SCALE, BAD DECISIONS FROM CHARISMATIC, VAINGLORIOUS, BUT NAIVE BULLIES**

wounds an organization's financial or reputational health. Managers are a dire risk to any organization. The more of them that exist within a company, the greater the likelihood that one will do something stupid, on a grand scale, with nobody around who can correct them.

Trying to set up safeguards to prevent dumb decisions from out-of-touch managers by establishing approval layers won't work for three reasons. First, these approval layers essentially stop an organization from being a fast-thinking, agile company that is quick on its feet and can take advantage of fast-moving events. Endless layers of approvals will prevent a company from moving at all, even to correct obvious and critical problems. The more management, the slower things

### **Managers vs. Front Line Workers**

But if managers represent a greater financial risk to an organization, why do so many people think that their company is safer in management's hands than frontline workers? The answer may lie in an inherent bias towards the types of personalities drawn to management. One could think they have a greater career investment, are more competent, or otherwise represent an employee group that will stay more focused on the job. Let's look at each of these reasons for pro-management bias individually and see how well they hold up to scrutiny.

First, let's look at how invested they are in their careers. While there is no question that rates of careerism can be expected to be higher among the managerial class, there is no reason to think that this investment will substantially create an inherently greater risk





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## DIATRIBE: GIVE POWER TO FRONT LINE WORKERS

pool from frontline workers.

The relative lack of careerism among frontline employees may indicate a healthier work-life balance and the lack of a win at all costs mentality. When careerism becomes toxic, too-ambitious employees can sacrifice anything and everything at the altar of professional ascendancy. Eventually, the temptation to sabotage the work of others, theatrically over-emphasize minor achievements, and misrepresent actual skill levels can become overwhelming. While frontline workers may fall victim to these temptations, rank and file employees are ensconced within a self-correcting peer group of relative equals. Lacking the power imbalances common within the managerial workgroups, bad dealing, and blatant ladder-climbing can be called out by co-equal co-workers with impunity. In other words, the lack of hierarchy at the front lines creates an inherent democratizing effect that allows for systemic self-correction. Relaxed careerism proves the power of non-hierarchical systems rather than upselling the value of career panic and an over-emphasis on employee control.

As already discussed, the overall competency of management can be challenging to gauge. Mediocre managers can often camouflage their incompetence behind a polished demeanor. What may appear to be highly valued skill sets can easily be theatrical salesmanship instead.

Is job focus among managers why companies cannot trust frontline workers with workplace autonomy - but can trust management? There is no question that job focus can improve job performance and that managers can fairly be expected to keep their eye on the ball at work. But, again, this argument cannot be used to make a case for authoritarianism at work; managers are less likely to know the intimate details of the day-to-day operation as rank and file workers. Even if they are more focused, they are less likely to be focused on the most valuable aspects of the job.

Meanwhile, Non-hierarchical systems can harness the collective wisdom

and experience of the peerage groups with enormous effectiveness. With more eyes and hands, problems can be quickly identified and corrected.

### Workplace Democracy Is Already Happening

While perfectly non-hierarchical workplaces are rare, they do exist. A few well-known worker co-ops and less-hierarchical companies are out there, most notably Morningstar, a tomato products processing company.

Morning Star was founded in 1970 by Chris Rufer, an MBA student at UCLA. Morning Star has three large plants that process virtually all tomato-based products sold

## **MEDIOCRE MANAGERS CAN OFTEN CAMOUFLAGE THEIR INCOMPETENCE BEHIND A POLISHED DEMEANOR. WHAT MAY APPEAR TO BE HIGHLY VALUED SKILL SETS CAN EASILY BE THEATRICAL SALESMANSHIP INSTEAD**

at supermarkets in the US. Morning Star's trucking company moves over two million tons of tomatoes annually, and the harvesting business handles the production. There is no question that the company is massive or could be home to a complex cadre of managers, middle managers, and executive managers. But, the company has largely forgone the use of supervisors, managers, and directors. Nobody has a "boss" they must answer to. Instead, each employee negotiates their job responsibilities and wages among themselves. More shockingly, each employee can spend company money and is expected to secure the training and the tools they need to perform their jobs. All of this is done without a single title and without anyone ever getting promoted.

Again, this happens at a large, capital-intensive corporation that processes hundreds of tons of products every hour and earns more than \$700 million yearly.

While shocking and innovative for a typical company, unionized workgroups may be less than impressed by the flat power structure. The fact that corporate America is "disrupted" by companies like Morningstar is proof of the decline of unionism in the US. After all, unions regularly negotiate things like pay, service hours, and work rules. And, they often do so at enormous organizations - including the Federal Government.

At United Airlines, for example, employees can determine their work hours, days off, and work areas with little to no manager involvement. They decide these things among themselves in "bids," where they use their years of service with the company as a kind of currency. With enough company seniority, you can get weekends off and a comfortable work area with hours around your schedule. If you have very little seniority, on the other hand, you can expect to get days off that fall mid-week and an evening shift in a less-desirable work area. These rules were negotiated by airline unions years ago and have been adopted as an industry-wide norm, even at non-union carriers.

And while unions can be expected to negotiate higher wages than their non-union counterparts, the higher wages have not resulted in widespread bankruptcies. On the contrary, airlines paying the highest amounts for labor are consistently the most profitable. To look again at United Airlines, for example, the carrier agreed to pay its union ground gate agents \$30/hour in 2018, just before earning historic profits over the next few years. During the COVID pandemic, union workers rallied around the airline to ask lawmakers to provide taxpayer funding - which allowed the airline to survive.

Careerism, job focus, and skill building, all the hallmarks of the manager class, are seen at union workplaces - among frontline employees. The difference is an evident lack of power imbalances between the employees and managers.



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## DIATRIBE: WHY ARE WORKERS SIDELINED?

### So Who Needs Who?

So, who needs who more? Do companies and managers need workers that are willing to put forward their best effort, remain loyal to the organization, and make it a career? Or, do employees need managers to control them? As with most things, the answer will lie somewhere in between; there must be a balance. However, on whole, managers have taken too much power, and workers have given too much away. If striking a balance is important, then working people in the US must reclaim some of their lost authority on the job. It is also clear that this process of reclamation cannot rely on the rare examples of beneficent company management like that of Morningstar. These examples are too few, and too far between. What is needed are unions.

We live in a world where society can trust an adult to start and raise a family and make independent decisions about when and under what conditions to buy a house or new car. Still, that same person can be told exactly when they will be allowed to use the bathroom at work. How have American workers allowed themselves to become so subordinate to another person?

I remember hearing a story when I was a newly-hired ramp worker at Continental Airlines. Airline work can attract a wide range of very talented people. It is not uncommon to work side by side with doctors, legal experts, school teachers, and other professionals drawn to the job with decent pay and airline benefits, such as free air travel. Several former professional athletes were among the ramp, gate, and ticket agents that worked at the airline at that time.

One famous retired professional baseball player worked on the ramp at Houston's IAH Airport. One day, he was spotted by a Hub Manager, who did not recognize him despite being a fan of his. Standing near a doorway, tired after working a particularly heavy flight, he had allowed his uniform shirt to come untucked and was making no effort to return to "professional standards of appearance." The Manager berated him in front of his coworkers, accusing him of being lazy, and scolding him for being

unkempt. At no point did he realize that he was meeting a childhood hero of his, the baseball player whose cards he had prized and carefully kept safe, even as an adult.

Also noteworthy was that the former baseball player, who had known fame and respect for most of his life, did not defend himself against his new "Superior." He quietly and respectfully tucked in his shirt and straightened his uniform to the Manager's satisfaction. Now, he had resigned himself to the fact that another man should be perfectly able to openly disrespect and belittle him without complaint or protest.

Non-union American workers expect to be treated in a demeaning and infantilizing way at work. Managers expect to be allowed to treat other grown adults this way, without repercussions.

Moreover, adult women and men allow themselves to be commanded to do the most menial tasks in fine detail by those who often have a poorer understanding of the job. They permit themselves to be given "busy work" that serves no purpose other than to deny a period of rest. They can have their time with families curtailed on a whim by a manager with a staffing shortage.

It is no surprise then that the American working class, so regularly disempowered, is becoming less familiar with democratic power, how to access it, or how to wield it.

But, the converse is also true; Managers cannot do the work at a company. They can only watch and, at best, facilitate its execution. They lack the numbers to fully staff a company. They depend on a critical mass of employees wanting to do a good job and perform their duties with precision and industry. A manager is hired based on their ability to control a workforce. If the workers make themselves uncontrollable, the Manager will be sacked.

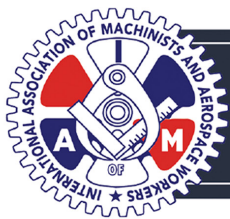
In other words, if a workplace is populated by professional workers dedicated to their jobs and who like coming to work, managers

## HAPPY WORKERS DO NOT NEED MANAGERS, AND UNHAPPY WORKERS CANNOT BE MANAGED

are not needed and are a liability to the company. Put yet another way, managers are not required if the workers consent to be managed by the work itself. If they do not consent to be managed, they can easily make themselves unmanageable, thus rendering managers ineffective.

Effective management is achieved through a feedback loop. Happy workers do not need managers, and unhappy workers cannot be managed.





# IAM CREWMEMBERS

Written by GO Crewmembers, for GO Crewmembers. Email organizers at [INFO@IAM141.org](mailto:INFO@IAM141.org).

## JetBlue's Union Response Except it's Marriage...

"But, I value our direct relationship!"

"You'll have to pay dues to the Marriage!"

"I don't want some Marriage coming in and telling me what to do!"

"We don't need a Marriage, because  
We've never got divorced!"

"But, I thought we were like  
a family!"

"You don't even know the  
Marriage! What if you don't  
like them?"



### Keep Signing Cards Till the Very Last Second

We've filed. But, the fight's not over. We need everybody. Sign a Card, get someone else to Sign a Card. **Let's win this.**





# HONOR & SERVICE



Knowing that the Machinists Union prioritizes honoring military veterans, Jim Smith had approached IAM Headquarters General Vice President Brian Bryant about a donation from the IAM.

"When Jim, who is a long-time friend, came to see if the IAM wanted to help in making the Memorial possible, I was immediately inspired and humbled," said Bryant. "IAM leadership made the call to make a donation to the project because we believe in honoring those who have served our country, and we know that our members in Ohio are proud to have their union contribute to such an incredible project for the community."

"When you retire from the IAM you never really retire. This union is a lifestyle," said Smith. "A lot of members come to see the memorial and when they see their union logo on that plaque it makes them feel good about what they're a part of," said Smith.

The memorial is in honor of South Lebanon's Revolutionary War soldiers and all of the veterans who served the country and community from 1795 to the present.

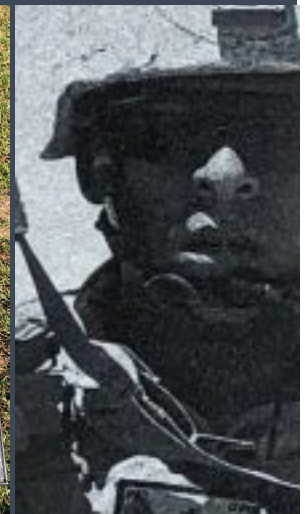
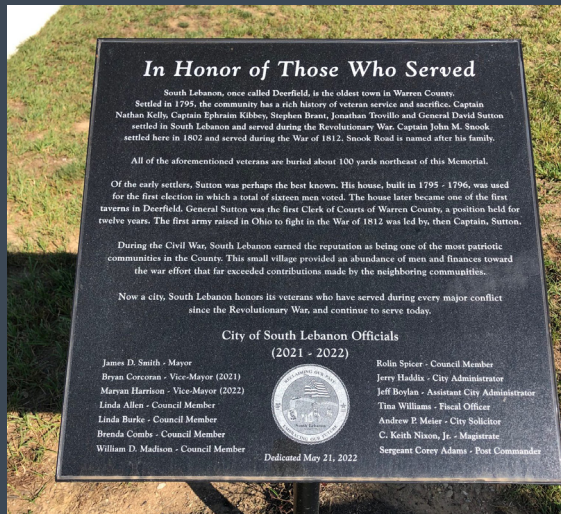
Not only did Smith help to design the memorial and solicit all of the donations, both monetary and in-kind, that made it possible, but he and three other Marines actually built the memorial. He also commissioned limited-edition coins of the memorial.

The community had a huge celebration for the memorial's dedication; it was standing-room only. State representatives, local officials, judges, military, and the high school band were there. The Marine Corps Honor Guard participated in the ceremony, and Major General Deborah Ashenhurst (U.S. Army, retired) spoke.

"It was an emotional event—people seeing pictures of their loved ones—it's hard to describe how nice the memorial is," said Smith. "I'm proud of it; of all the things I've done, this one of the most satisfying accomplishments of my whole life."



For more than 25 years Jim Smith, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran and retired IAM Eastern Territory Chief of Staff, has wanted to memorialize military veterans in his South Lebanon, OH community, where Smith serves as mayor.





# 69TH IAMAW DISTRICT 141 CONVENTION

*The 69th Convention of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) drew to a close on Thursday, but not before providing an opportunity to recap a long list of remarkable improvements to airline work.*

The event drew hundreds of top labor leaders from the airline industry, representing ground, gate, ticket counter, and other airline workers from every major airport in the US. The achievements celebrated at the event included union victories spanning the full spectrum of airport workplaces, including gate and ticket counters, ramp and ground personnel, janitors, security guards, and instructors.

Highlighting Union Triumphs in Commercial Aviation  
The wins included a historic wave of impressive contractual agreements throughout the commercial aviation industry. These included the 2020

negotiation of a first contract at SM Cargo, which was overwhelmingly ratified by the newly organized membership. Another agreement, this one for janitorial workers at Flagship, was approved unanimously by every union member at the company.

Union Members also overwhelmingly ratified a 2021 agreement at Spirit, the second union contract for fleet service workers at the airline.

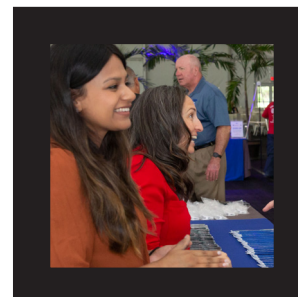
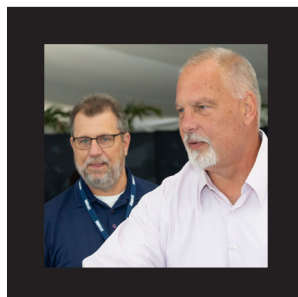
"We were extremely proud of the overwhelmingly ratified agreement we negotiated at Spirit Airlines," said District President Mike Klemm, who led the Convention. "This was only the second contract we negotiated with the carrier, and we all know

how challenging those first contracts are to accept for newly organized groups," he told the delegation. "Our members received wage increases that are, on average, 30% higher than they were previously," he said to applause.

"Lead premium increases mean more opportunities for double-time pay, we established new training positions which allow our members to earn even more income from the work they currently already do," he continued. "But, this Agreement also brings paid vacations to part-time agents. And, for some of those folks, this will be the first real paid vacation they've ever known,"



The achievements celebrated at the event included union victories spanning the full spectrum of airport workplaces, including gate and ticket counters, ramp and ground personnel, janitors, security guards, and instructors. **Photos: Brian Vega, IAMAW 141 Communications Coordinator.**





Klemm said of the Spirit Agreement. "For those of us at legacy carriers, paid vacations are a normal part of life, but these folks were able to negotiate the first-ever paid vacations, making history at Spirit Airlines."

Last Tuesday, Union Reps attended a formal signing ceremony for the most-recently ratified Agreement at Hawaiian Airlines, which was secured earlier this year. That Agreement will provide significantly improved wage increases and seniority protections for part-timers. Part-timers will also gain access to family health care for the first time in the carriers' existence. It will also provide better flexibility with day and shift trades and impose financial penalties when

the company intrudes on workers' personal and family time with mandatory overtime.

#### AT UNITED, CALLS FOR UNION MEMBERS TO EMAIL COMPANY EXECUTIVES

But the main topic at the Convention centered around the contentious negotiations with United Airlines. Although the carrier had committed to producing a solid tentative agreement for union members to vote on by August 1, the talks broke down after weeks of company stonewalling.

"The days of Oscar Munoz are over," President Klemm said of the negotiations. "Oscar was a people person. He cared about people, and he cared about the airline. And, we rewarded that commitment. After that Agreement was reached, United Airlines experienced the best financial success in the history of the carrier," he went on. "And we showed up. During the pandemic, we couldn't work from home, or from behind a desk. We were there for this airline when it mattered most. We were there when the carrier went to lawmakers for emergency funds to get through the months when travel was nearly impossible. We produced thousands of calls and visits to lawmakers, securing the money the company needed to survive," he said.

"The thanks we get for that sacrifice is a slap in the face offer so insulting to this membership that talks broke down through the entire month of August."

"They're saying that our members don't really care about job security, and pay raises that wouldn't even buy half a gallon of gas are ok," he said.

"All we're asking for is that, if we are willing to do right by this company, then this company should do right by us. That's all we're asking. If we show up to work, do our jobs well, and honor our commit-

ments to this company, then United should be willing to say, in writing, that they will not arbitrarily decide one day to eliminate or outsource our jobs," he said to roars of applause from the assembled delegates.

President Klemm also told the Convention that the recent solidarity actions around the nation have been effective. "They got flustered," he said. "They didn't expect to see all the 'Contract Now' signs. They didn't expect to have their inboxes flooded with emails. When they saw that outpouring of solidarity, they got rattled." Klemm encouraged the union to step up its already impressive email campaign, as company executives can't miss personal messages in their in-

boxes. "If you've already written to Kirby, do it again," he said. "Do it every week. If you know someone that normally sits quietly and lets things play out, encourage them not to sit this one out," he said. "I have seen how those emails have made the company rethink their position with my own eyes."

For pointers, Klemm told the delegates that personal stories are more effective than insults when writing to Kirby and other company executives. "Tell them how inflation is affecting your family. Tell them how important your job is to you," Klemm said. "We think that 60% of our members at United have yet to send an email to the company. That means we have a lot more in the tank. If they're already getting nervous, imagine what can happen if thousands more of us join in."

#### JETBLUE FILES FOR REPRESENTATION

The Convention is coming to a close as JetBlue organizing begins a new

phase; 3000 Ground Operations Crewmembers successfully filed for a union representation vote at the airline, a first for ground crews. On Friday, the Machinists Union announced that it would file for a union representation vote with the National Mediation Board, the Federal agency that oversees labor law for airlines. The efforts to organize ground operations at JetBlue are led by inside committees staffed by current JetBlue workers. Sensing the campaign was reaching a critical stage, these committees opted to skip the Convention and continue their organizing work.

Even without its entire cadre of organizers, union growth was prominent at the Convention. Speaking at the event was Amazon Labor Union activist Tristan Lion Dutchin, whose efforts to organize the first-ever union at the shipping giant led to his unlawful termina-





“When they saw that outpouring of solidarity, they got rattled.”



*Machinist Union District President, Mike Klemm offered United no face-saving way out of the issue of job protections for union members. “United should be willing to say, in writing, that they will not arbitrarily decide one day to eliminate or out-source our jobs,” he said to roars of applause from the assembled delegates.*

tion from the Staten Island Facility where he had been employed. His story earned international headlines and helped secure an eventual union win at Amazon. Machinist Union delegates at the Convention, moved by his story, raised a little over \$2,000, which they awarded to Dutchin in honor of his dedication to the cause of union organizing.

This was just one of the rounds of donations delegates raised for important charities. Guide Dogs of America, which provides service dogs to veterans, children with autism, and visually impaired persons at no cost, was also championed at the Convention. In all, delegates raised approximately \$17,000 for charitable organizations and causes.

Held in Orlando, Florida, from September 20-22, the 69th Convention of Machinists Union District 141 drew 224 delegates from Local Lodges around the nation. Also attending were Machinists Union senior leaders, including General Vice President Richard Johnsen.

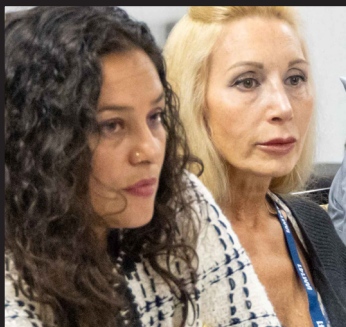
Johnsen is spearheading a range of innovative new programs at the union, including strengthening alliances with other labor organizations, ensuring that new hires are connected to the larger union, and creating a movement-driven mission for labor. The comments fit into the larger vision that Johnsen has painted for unionism as a vital social cause – and more than a set of membership services.

“All around the nation, people are starting to see the value of their labor and wondering where they fit in. We can be that for them; their work has incredible value to unions and working people. At the end of the day, companies only value money. We, as working people, can be so much more. We can help each other spend more time with our families, work in safer environments, and earn better livelihoods in more rewarding careers. We can do that by acting in union, and bringing the power of collective action to bear for working Americans.”

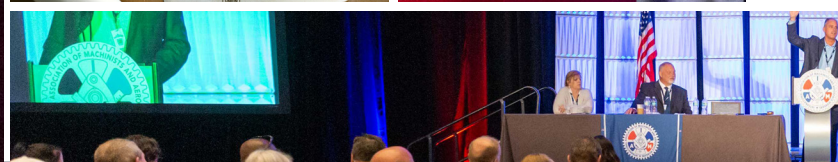
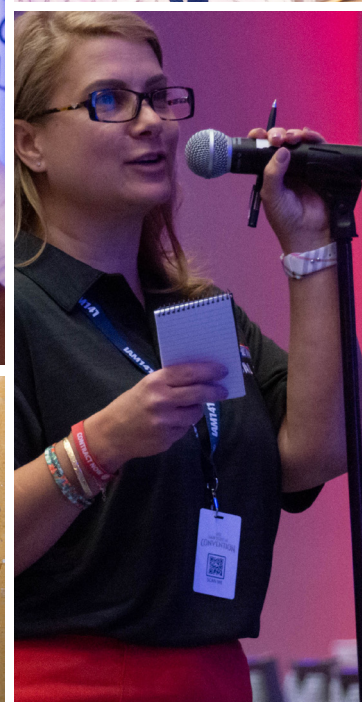
*General Vice President Richard Johnsen (Right) and District 141 President, Mike Klemm*



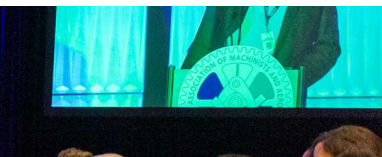
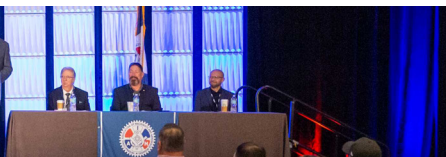




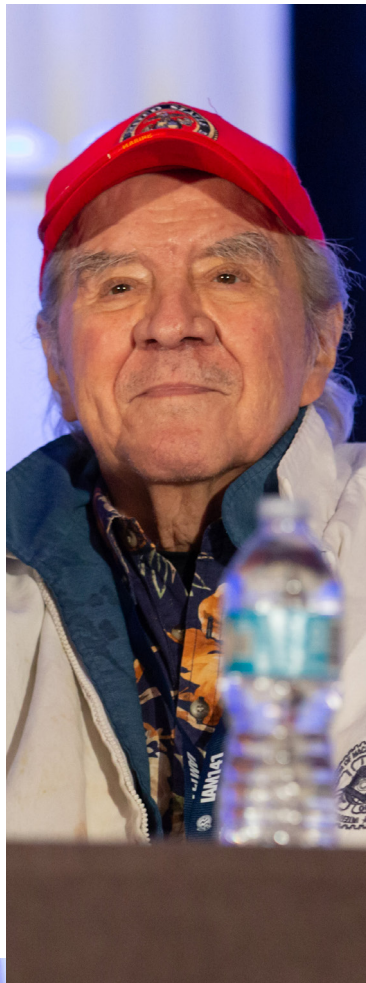




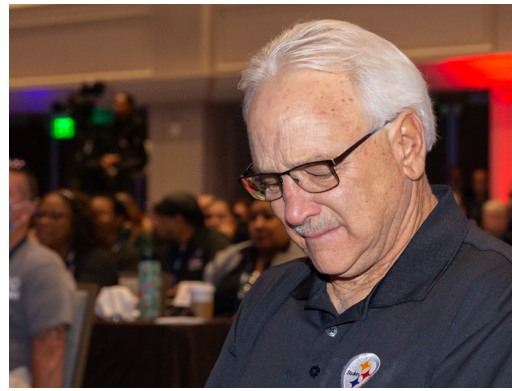












*Longtime Safety Director, Tony D'Aloiso, announcing his retirement.*















# Legislation & **LABOR**





## Machinists Union Applauds U.S. House Passage of Global Aircraft Maintenance Safety Improvement Act

WASHINGTON, Sept. 29, 2022 — The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) applauds the U.S. House passage of the Global Aircraft Maintenance Safety Improvement Act (H.R. 7321), bipartisan legislation that strengthens Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) oversight of commercial airline repair facilities outside the United States. The chamber's action advances the legislation for Senate consideration.

"We thank the U.S. House of Representatives for passing this very important bill that prioritizes the safety of passengers and airline workers," said IAM Air Transport General Vice President Richard Johnsen. "We now look to the Senate to pass this legislation and get it signed into law. This would finally set some much-needed standards for carrier facilities outside the U.S. It's only fair that foreign locations apply the same high-quality standards done here domestically, which helps ensure the safety of passengers and airline workers."

The House passage comes just days after the IAM, the largest airline union in North America, representing over 100,000 airline workers, signed onto a joint letter supporting the legislation that was introduced by Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Peter DeFazio (D-OR).

"We thank Chairman DeFazio for introducing and championing for House passage of this bill. For years, we've been saying that it's unfair for U.S. employees to compete for work against foreign facilities

that do not mirror our standards. That has resulted in carriers increasingly enticed by the financial incentives to push this work overseas," said IAM International President Robert Martinez, Jr. "In addition to safety, this legislation helps preserve good, highly skilled jobs here in the U.S."

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.

*The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers is one of the largest and most diverse industrial trade unions in North America, representing approximately 600,000 active and retired members in the aerospace, defense, airlines, railroad, transit, healthcare, automotive, and other industries.*





September 23, 2022

### **Support the Bipartisan Global Aircraft Maintenance Safety Improvement Act (H.R. 7321)**

Dear Representative,

On behalf of workers across the airline industry, we are writing to encourage you to support the bipartisan Global Aircraft Maintenance Safety Improvement Act (H.R. 7321) when it comes up for a vote on the House floor. This legislation removes incentives for airlines to offshore maintenance jobs by closing safety loopholes which allow US-aircraft to be repaired on lower safety standards at FAA-certified facilities abroad.

Over the objections of Congress, as well as safety and consumer groups, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has created regulatory gaps in five areas, defining different standards for maintenance performed abroad versus maintenance performed in the U.S. Unlike domestic facilities, FAA-certified repair facilities abroad are not required to:

- Conduct drug and alcohol testing on safety-sensitive personnel;
- Perform background checks on workers;
- Assess security threats for facilities;
- Allow unannounced FAA inspections of maintenance operations; and,
- Meet minimum qualifications for aircraft mechanics.

Collectively, these regulatory gaps create significant and ongoing safety concerns. Heavy maintenance checks can include disassembling engines and removing wings from an airframe. Repair work performed in these areas, deep inside of the aircraft, is often hidden from visual inspection and can go unobserved for long periods of time. Our safety system relies on qualified, trusted professionals to perform this work and conduct quality control to ensure standards are being met. Work performed on lower safety standards lacks these essential components.



Additionally, these loopholes are incentivizing the offshoring of good jobs in the airline industry. Mechanics can be hired immediately in Mexico while those in the US must wait weeks for a background check. Facilities that never face unannounced inspections do not face the same compliance costs as those that do. The weight of these regulatory gaps is undermining both safety and US jobs.

H.R. 7321 would establish one uniform level of safety for aircraft repair, maintenance, and overhaul regardless of where the service is performed. This would bring our regulations back in line with Congressional intent going back decades to ensure that aircraft maintenance is always held to the highest level of scrutiny. We strongly support this bill and hope you will vote “yes” when HR 7321 comes before the House.

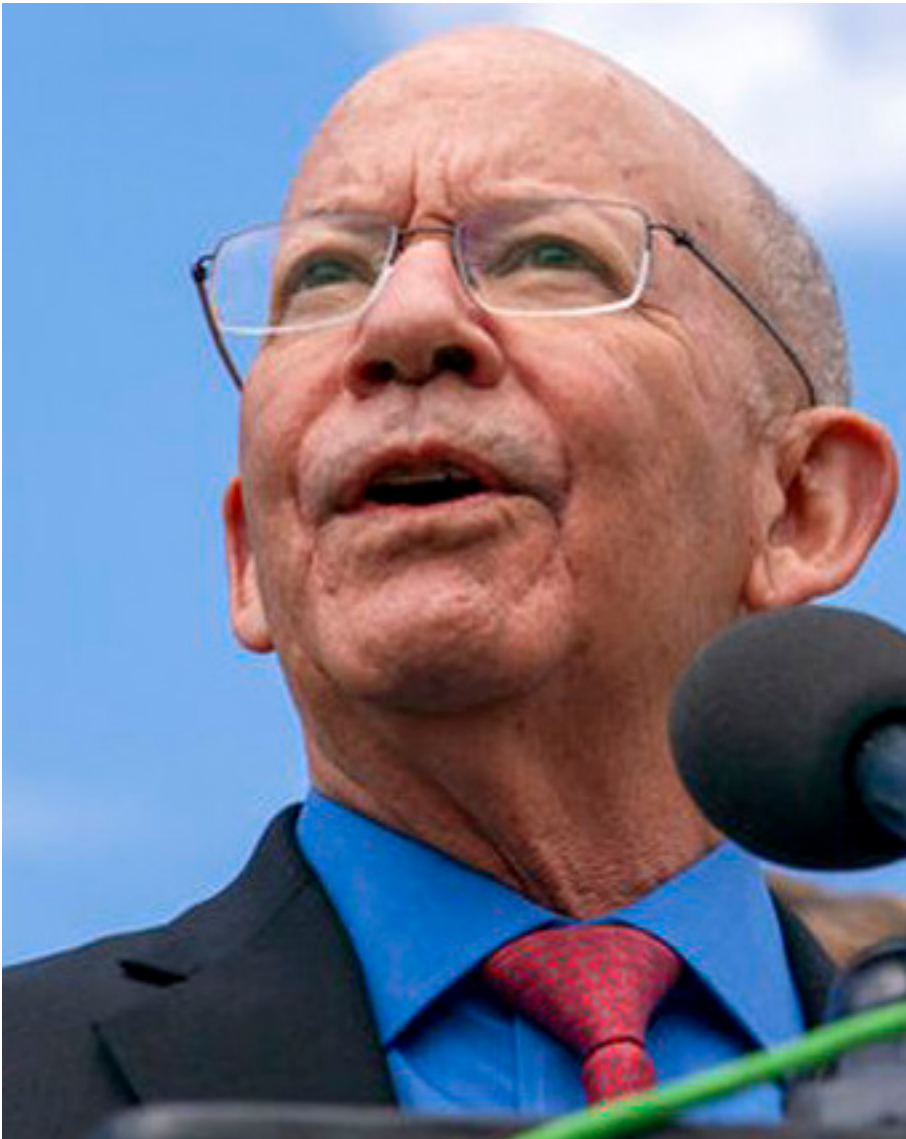
Sincerely,

Air Line Pilots Association  
Association of Flight Attendants-CWA  
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers  
International Brotherhood of Teamsters  
National Air Traffic Controllers Association  
Professional Aviation Safety Specialists  
Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO  
Transport Workers Union of America





# SAFER SKIES



House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Chair Peter DeFazio (D-OR)

**Washington, DC-** This week, Chair of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Peter DeFazio (D-OR) applauded the House passage of four bills under the jurisdiction of the committee, including his bill, the Global Aircraft Maintenance Safety Improvement Act. Chair DeFazio also joined Rep. André Carson (D-IN) in applauding the passage of Carson's bill, the National Center for the Advancement of Aviation Act of 2022.

"I am pleased my bill, the Global Aircraft Maintenance Safety Improvement Act, was passed in the House to close the gap between our safety standards and those of foreign repair stations. By ensuring a uniform standard of safety, no matter where an aircraft is repaired and maintained, we will make our skies safer," Chair DeFazio said. "In addition, we must build and sustain our aviation workforce in order to further strengthen the U.S. aviation sector and remain world leaders—creating the National Center for the Advancement of Aviation will help us do just that. I applaud the work of Rep. André Carson who championed this bill. I look forward to the Senate approving both of these bills without delay."

"The National Center for the Advancement of Aviation Act is a bipartisan, bicameral investment in the future of a essential industry for our country," said Rep. Carson. "Our committee has worked for years to make American skies the safest in the world and maintain the highest standards of aviation excellence. By fostering better collaboration across all aviation sectors and improving safety and best practices, this bill will do just that. The aviation and aerospace industry supports over 11 million jobs and contributes more than \$1.6 trillion a year to the national economy. The National Center for the Advancement of Aviation will help make this vital industry even more safe and vibrant for decades to come."





## LEGISLATION THAT WORKS FOR WORKING PEOPLE



### **H.R. 7321, Global Aircraft Maintenance Safety Improvement Act**

U.S. airlines increasingly outsource heavy maintenance work to aeronautical repair stations outside the United States—including facilities in El Salvador, Mexico, and China. However, U.S. and foreign repair stations are not subject to identical safety standards. Under Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) rules, workers at U.S. repair stations are subject to screening for substance abuse; workers at foreign repair stations are not. Workers at U.S. repair stations are subject to background investigations; no single FAA regulation explicitly requires such investigations of workers at foreign facilities.

The Global Aircraft Maintenance Safety Improvement Act, originally introduced by Chair DeFazio with 13 bipartisan cosponsors, will address weaknesses in the FAA's application of safety rules to foreign repair stations by requiring annual unannounced inspections, mandating the reporting of mechanical issues and problems attributable to foreign repairs, compelling the agency to conduct required background checks of foreign repair station employees, and more.

### **H.R. 3482, National Center for the Advancement of Aviation Act**

The U.S. aviation industry has experienced workforce challenges for the last several years. For instance, the Federal Aviation Administration predicts more than 50 percent of the current science and engineering workforce will soon hit retirement age, creating a need to develop the aviation workforce of the future as we approach this rising wave of new retirements.

H.R. 3482, introduced by Rep. André Carson, would help address these workforce issues by creating a "National Center for the Advancement of Aviation," a federally chartered, independent entity to support and promote the civil aviation workforce. The bill would help develop a skilled and robust U.S. aviation workforce by funding scholarships, apprenticeships, aviation curriculum development, and other outreach efforts; serve as an educational repository for sharing information on workforce development and skills training; and provide a national independent forum to support collaboration among aviation stakeholders.

### **H.R. 5461, SPEED Recovery Act**

This bill, introduced by Ranking Member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Sam Graves (R-MO), increases to \$1 million the threshold for what qualifies as a small project under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, thereby allowing more recovery projects to proceed under simplified procedures. The threshold must be reviewed every three years. In addition, the Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security must conduct an audit, and report to Congress, on whether there has been waste and abuse as a result of the change in the threshold.



## Helping Hands

# September

IAMAW District 141



**Bryan Hutchinson, M.S.**

EAP Director

[Bhutchinson@IAM141.org](mailto:Bhutchinson@IAM141.org)

Cell: (303) 229-5117

## September Helping Hands: Financial Stability

### EAP Peer Volunteers:

This month we focus on financial issues - specifically budgeting. While mental health issues are very prominent because of covid, financial issues are much more common than they were before 2019. The resources listed can help with many different financial concerns - the Consumer Finance Protection Bureau is a terrific resource for all of our members. They cover a lot of ground and a lot of financial topics.

Thank you for taking good care of our members. Being there for the in a time of need is important work and I am appreciative of all you are doing.

Bryan,  
Bryan Hutchinson, M.S.



### How Can We Help You?

#### The District 141 Employee Assistance

Program can quickly and confidentially connect you to counselling, 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



## Your Financial Resources

### Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

(Excerpts from [consumerfinance.gov](https://consumerfinance.gov))

### Budgeting

Making and sticking to a budget is a key step towards getting a handle on your debt and working towards a savings goal, of any kind. Let's say you want to set money aside for emergencies or you aspire to save up for a much larger goal like a car, down payment on a house, or retirement. Until you get a realistic picture of how much money you're bringing in and where it's going, it's difficult to know whether you'll have enough left over to put away.

Getting started can be the hardest part, especially if your finances feel out of control, but these easy-to-follow steps are designed to help you create a budget that really works for you.



- Step 1: Where does my money come from? The first place to start is getting a complete picture of where your money comes from. You may be self-employed, have multiple jobs or receive child support or government benefits -- all these sources should factor into what you have available to make ends meet. Start by recording all of your income with our Income Tracker.
- Step 2: Where does my money go? Equally important but the heaviest lift is logging your spending, so you get a realistic picture of what your money, on an average month, is going to. Our Spending Tracker helps you both log and sort your spending by categories like utilities and housing to eating out and entertainment. If this feels overwhelming, start small and look at your expenses one week at a time by either reviewing your receipts or checking account. You could also start a daily log of your expenses so you're making sure to capture those small expenses -- like buying breakfast or lunch instead of bringing it with you -- that add up over time.
- Step 3: What are all my bills and when are they due? If you're coming up short at the end of the month, it could be that the timing for your bills and income don't match. Our Bill Calendar is designed to help you remember when your bills are due but also keep in mind weeks when you need to be careful about your spending. Missing payments or not paying on time can also have larger impacts on your credit scores and overall financial well-being.
- Step 4: Create your working budget. Once you've identified all of your income sources and started tracking your spending and when your bills are due, our Budget Worksheet pulls everything together so you have a working and realistic budget.

Creating a budget will help you figure out if you have enough money to cover your expenses, while also having enough to save or spend on something extra you may want for yourself or your family. Be sure to update your budget if you experience a change in employment or your spending habits.



## Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Resources

The following resources can be found at: [www.consumerfinance.gov](http://www.consumerfinance.gov)

If you are reading an electronic version of Helping Hands you can use the hyperlinks to click on any underlined resources to take you directly to the page.

Guides to help you understand and plan for big financial goals.

These are some examples of the resources you can find on the CFPB pages:

- [Buying a house](#) [Disasters and emergencies](#), [Getting an auto loan](#), [Helping a loved one manage their money](#), [Money as You Grow](#), [Navigating the military financial lifecycle](#), [Paying for college](#), [Planning for retirement](#)

### Find answers to your financial questions

Browse by money topic to find answers to commonly asked financial questions. Learn the basics, understand key terms, and find ways to take action when you have an issue.

Browse answers to hundreds of financial questions. [Ask CFPB](#)

- [Auto loans](#), [Bank accounts and services](#), [Credit cards](#), [Credit reports and scores](#), [Debt collection](#), [Fraud and scams](#), [Money transfers](#), [Mortgages](#), [Payday loans](#), [Prepaid cards](#), [Reverse mortgages](#), [Student loans](#)

The heart and soul of the District 141 Employee Assistance Program is the local lodge EAP peer coordinator. These dedicated men and women

personal time to members and are experiencing EAP peer make clinical evaluations, trained to make of your



volunteer their assist other union their families who personal difficulties. volunteers do not diagnoses or clinical however, they are a basic assessment situation and refer

you to an appropriate resource for a more detailed evaluation. EAP peer volunteers will follow up to ensure you have been able to access services that address the difficulty you were experiencing.

## IAM EAP Airline Chairmen

United Airlines Tony Rodriguez, 303-525-3334

E-mail: [iameaptony@gmail.com](mailto:iameaptony@gmail.com)

American Airlines Chris Davis: 704-572-4859,

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

### **Spending Tips**

The following are questions to ask if you feel your spending is getting out of control:

What expenses surprised you?

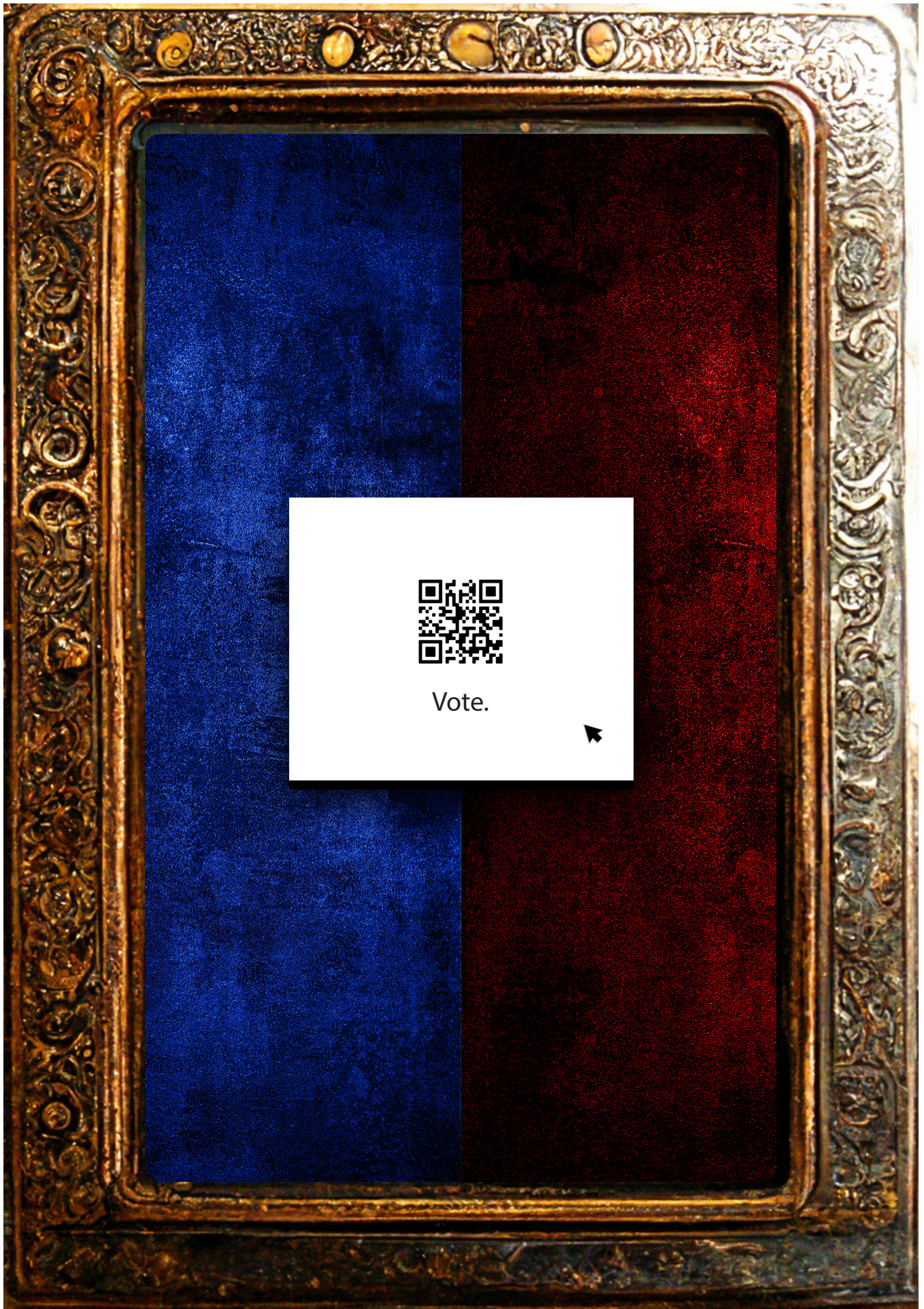
Are there areas where you spent that you now consider unnecessary?

Are you paying for services or subscriptions that you're not really using?

Are there service fees on your credit card or other financial services that you could eliminate?

How does your weekday spending differ from what you spend on week-ends?







JETBLUE GROUND OPERATIONS PREPARES TO FILE FOR A

# UNION







ORGANIZING

# THOUSANDS OF JETBLUE GROUND WORKERS ORGANIZING WITH MACHINISTS

*IAM Files for Union Representation Election for  
Approximately 3,000 JetBlue Ground Workers*

**WASHINGTON, Sept. 23, 2022** — The International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM), North America's largest airline union, today announced that it will file an application with the National Mediation Board (NMB), the federal agency that conducts union representation elections in the airline and railroad sectors. The IAM has sufficient interest among JetBlue Fleet Service workers to conduct a union representation election.

"I congratulate all JetBlue Ground Operations workers for uniting in solidarity and demanding that a union representation election be conducted," said IAM International President Robert Martinez Jr. "It's been a long road for these brave workers to get to this point,

and the IAM stands shoulder to shoulder with them. We will mobilize our union's significant resources to ensure that these brave and resilient JetBlue workers have a fair and free election."

JetBlue Ground Operations workers rebooted their efforts to gain union representation in 2021 after working through the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused the worst financial downturn in the airline industry's history.

"It's high time that JetBlue workers gain the dignity and respect of a union contract, and a strong voice on the job,"

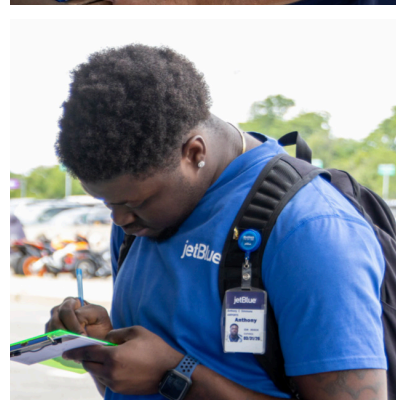
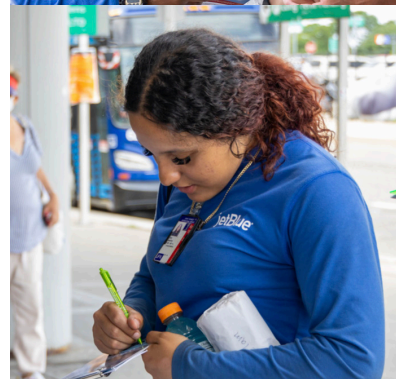
said IAM Air Transport Territory General Vice President Richard Johnsen. "When our country needed essential goods and services to where they were needed most during the pandemic, JetBlue workers answered the bell and risked their lives and health to make that happen. What did they get from management? They got their hours and pay cut because they didn't have a seat at the table. That will end very soon."

"I also fully expect for JetBlue management to adhere to the law and allow JetBlue workers to vote without influence, coercion and interference from JetBlue management. If not, we will leave no stone unturned to hold them accountable," continued Johnsen.

JetBlue workers

have cited below-standard industry pay rates and benefits, poor and unsafe working conditions, unjustified discipline and terminations, among many other issues as reasons to gain IAM representation and a seat at the table.

"JetBlue workers are a smart, strong and determined group of workers and we can't wait to welcome them into the IAM family," said IAM District 141 President Mike Klemm. "The IAM will support JetBlue workers in getting to and winning this election and negotiating a union contract that reflects their true value to JetBlue Airways."



PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRIAN VEGA





# IAM INFORMED

FACEBOOK IAMJETBLUE TWITTER IAM4JETBLUE INSTAGRAM IAM4JETBLUE

## JetBlue Management Cracks Down on Discipline, Write-Ups and Terminations After Peak Summer Travel



Reports around the system are that JetBlue supervisors are turning up the heat and starting to discipline and terminate GO Crewmembers for things that supervisors looked the other way on when they needed all hands on deck during the peak summer travel season.

When GO Crewmembers have a Union Contract, unjustified discipline and terminations will stop. GO Crewmembers will have access to a fair grievance procedure that is NOT controlled by JetBlue management. GO Crewmembers will have trained GO Crewmember Union Representatives that will defend GO Crewmembers who are disciplined or terminated without "just cause." Every Union Contract contains a "just cause" provision, which has seven tests. If any of the seven tests are not

met, then discipline cannot be issued.

These are the seven tests: (1) Did the employee know the company's policy; (2) Is the company's policy reasonable; (3) Did the company investigate to determine if the employee violated the policy; (4) Was the investigation fair and objective; (5) Did substantial evidence exist of the employee's violation of the policy; (6) Was the company's policy consistently applied; and (7) Is the discipline reasonable and proportional (did the punishment fit the crime?).

If any of the above tests are not met, then the discipline is unjustified.

Without having "just cause," JetBlue management can discipline and terminate Crewmembers at any time for any reason. It's called "at will employment." The CBB states in part: The guidelines presented in the Blue Book are not intended and will in no way be considered to be a contract of employment between JetBlue and any Crewmember...no Crewmember of JetBlue has a contract of employment. [JetBlue] reserves the right to accept a resignation or to separate the employment relationship at any time within the Company's discretion...JetBlue management has the sole prerogative and discretion to determine the seriousness of violations.

It's time for change.



**Ground Ops Crew members deserve to be at the table whenever decisions that impact the JetBlue workplace are made.** When we work together, we win together. Contact an IAM Organizer today to find out how you can bring real unity to JetBlue. **Call or Text: (954) 298-9138.**

### Have you signed a card yet?

Once a majority of Crewmembers at Ground Ops have authorized a union election, IAMAW Organizers will deliver the signed cards to the Federal Government, triggering a vote at JetBlue. Get a card from any union organizer, or have one sent to you from [IAMJetBlue.com](http://IAMJetBlue.com).







**SAFETY NEVER SLEEPS**

DEC 13-15  
Machinists Union District 141  
SAFETY CONFERENCE





**October 13**



PAWS FORE PASCARELLA

