

Our Voice on Capitol Hill

Northwest Airlines Master Executive Council Government Affairs Committee

Association of Flight Attendants – CWA, AFL-CIO

Government Affairs Committee Report

July 31, 2008

Dear Leaders and members:

Our Issues:

Our Issues – FMLA

We are at the end of the road for the FMLA effort. The Congress is in recess and we have not been able to garner the bi-partisan support that we need in the Senate to move the bill to the floor for a vote. Although there is still time upon their return to garner this support, the likelihood looks dim as both the House and the Senate will be focused on the November elections. This hurdle however, will not deter us. We will continue to encourage our members to contact their state Senators' offices and we will continue and try to get the bill through before this session is over at the end of this year. Remember if we fail to achieve our goal this time around, we will have to begin our efforts all over again for the next session.

To that end, we must increase our efforts to reach out to our Local Council members encouraging them to continue to call their Senators. One of the most effective ways to reach our members is cell phone and script in hand and having flight attendants make their calls on the spot. During the summer recess calls can be made to the District Offices. Local Councils should also be contacting their Central Labor Councils and State AFL-CIO Federations asking them to send out an action alert on this issue. For Senate contact information and script please go to www.nwaafa.org/committees/govaffairs.

The NMB proposed rule changes:

The NMB has proposed to change its rules and there has been much discussion and much mis-information regarding this proposed rules change. First of all these proposed rules changes will in no way hinder our ability or resolve to continue to fight for representation. We WILL have an election at Delta once the NMB determines that we are one work group. We still maintain that we make up at least 35% of the combined work group and that is a fact that is unlikely to change between now and the time we are a merged work group. What the proposed rules change is the way that the NMB determines a substantial majority when one unionized group merges with another non-unionized group and the unionized group requests a continuance of representation as a result of a majority. Although we are concerned about this rules change and suspect of it's timing, we should not allow it to create anxiety among our members. We have been in contact with several members of Congress and they are in concert with us. Our friends on the Hill will advocate on our behalf against the clearly abusive manner in which this agency, appointed by an anti-worker administration, is acting. If anything this should be a wake-up call to all of us. We MUST elect a worker friendly administration into office. If we fail to do so, the next President of the United States could be the catalyst that closes the lid on all our efforts by continuing to appoint anti-worker leaders to these agencies.

Voter Information Week – VOTE'08:

The Voter Information campaign is set for the third week in August (August 18-22). We will be collaborating with the NWA Government Affairs team and In-flight Team on a Voter Information Campaign at each base. Volunteers from our Government Affairs committee will man tables and offer information regarding voter registration as well as absentee ballot request information. A comprehensive guide has been compiled by the NWA Government Affairs that will aide our volunteers in providing information to our members. Northwest recognizes the importance of getting out the vote and they have enthusiastically agreed to participate and offer their resources for this effort. We will be placing tables strategically in or near each In-flight office so that we can also extend this effort to ground personnel as well as flight attendants and pilots.

Every base manager has been advised and will be available to help us with this effort. We have had a conference call with all base Chairs and volunteers to discuss the logistics and we are ready to go. I ask that each president extend their full support to their base chairs and help out wherever and whenever they can. This effort is vital to our ability to continue our fight on the

legislative front. Although we will not be recommending to any member how to vote, we need everyone to vote in this election. If we elect the wrong people into office we could see all of our efforts to improve the lives of flight attendants go, for lack of a better term - *“to the toilet”!*

There are some additional guidelines that are worth repeating and that we must follow in order to focus on our goal to get as many of our employees to vote in this very important election cycle. Discussion of union business will not be allowed at the tables. Any questions about the union or any questions about an individual flight attendant issue will be referred to the council. Any discussion on whom to vote for or support will be discouraged. We must respect all political affiliations and keep this effort completely bi-partisan. A list of AFA heroes will be made available to the members if they choose to look at it.

This was placed on our web page and I thought it was worth placing on my Report.

The Power of Your Vote!

The Importance of The Presidency and the importance of your decision.

At about this time just before every Presidential election many of us have decided whom we will be voting for in November. Some of us are not sure and are listening carefully to each candidate in hopes of hearing something that will give us an indication on who would be the better choice. All of us should know and be aware of the importance of our choice. Anyone in doubt of the importance of our choice need go no further than some past administrations that have come into office with great hope and ended up disappointing us with their decisions, especially in the area of appointments. Whether you vote Republican, Democrat or Independent we should all take our responsibility seriously and vote according not only to our personal values, but also taking under consideration what effect our choice will have on our families, our jobs, our livelihood, our future and the future of our country.

The most important thing to remember about voting for a new Administration is knowing that whomever we vote for will be appointing judges to Courts across the nation and the Supreme Court as well as heads of agencies that will directly determine our future. Even when their Presidential tenures only last four years, the effects of their decisions can last a lifetime. Although anyone appointed to these various courts and agencies must be qualified, every Administration gets to appoint their friends and supporters and as such loyalty plays a huge role. Congress must approve most of these choices, but as we have seen in the past, most appointees get through the toughest of scrutiny and all appointees remain loyal to the Administration that appointed them.

As Aviation workers, we should pay special attention to appointments to such agencies as the National Mediation Board and the Federal Aviation Agency. Both of these agencies are charged with guiding our industry in the areas of safety regulations and how and / or when we vote for representation, or even if we keep our collective bargaining rights. In the case of Northwest Airlines, we are well aware of the power that the National Mediation Board and the courts can have on our livelihood.

The importance of the Presidency and the influence it has on our lives does not stop at appointments. As witnessed when we lobby for changes to laws that affect our workplace like the recent clarification to the FMLA laws. We are seeing that even when we garner bi-partisan and overwhelming support in one House, the administration and its agencies can have enough influence to kill the bill in another.

As November 4 nears listen carefully to each candidate and determine which one will appoint leaders to the courts and Federal agencies that will take under consideration your best interest as an Aviation worker. Make sure that your decision is the right decision for you and your family. Never underestimate the importance of your decision and the Presidency on your future.

Website:

Please visit our web page at www.nwaafa.org/committees/govaffairs/ for the latest information on our issues. Our page is updated frequently and is full of links that will help you stay informed. You may also find out how and where to register to vote, view a video from the FMLA vote and read up on the Presidential election and much more.

Respectfully,

Albert Garcia
Government Affairs Chair
NWA Master Executive Council

Cc: MEC Officers
MEC (LEC Presidents)
Diana L. Mitcham – Vice Chair
Local Government Affairs Committee Chairs - members
Shane Larson – AFA-CWA
MEC Government Affairs Chairs –AFA-CWA Carriers
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