

NWA-AFA MEC Weekly Hotline Message February 06, 2009

AFA ASKS AND CONGRESS RESPONDS!

This past week members of our Government Affairs Committee met with over 100 Congressional offices asking them to sign on to a letter urging President Obama to appoint a worker friendly National Mediation Board (NMB) as soon as possible. The letter was initiated by our good friend and labor champion, the Honorable Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA) from the 34th district in CA. In the letter Rep. Roybal-Allard expressed concerns over the fact that the current "NMB has increasingly tilted in favor of employers over employees making organizing efforts and representation elections more difficult." It goes further to let the President know that time is of the essence as the NMB will soon oversee the full integration of Delta and Northwest Airlines. The election schedule, the voting environment, the tolerance of management anti-union campaigning and election rules are all governed by the NMB. The letter urges the administration to act quickly to appoint a fair-minded replacement to the current National Mediation Board to ensure that the rights of all airline and rail employees are protected. At the end of a two-day marathon of meetings we gathered over 80 signatures from the House and the letter has been sent to President Obama. In addition to the over 80 signatures on the Roybal-Allard letter, Rep. Thaddeus McCotter (R-MI), Rep. Sander Levin (D-MI) and Rep. Ellen Tauscher (D-CA) sent their own individual letters to President Obama. We are hopeful that the administration will act and appoint an NMB that we can count on for fairness in time for our election. We would like to express our gratitude to Rep. Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA) for taking the initiative on this sign-on letter. We know that you will also want to thank her with a personal note of gratitude by sending her a simple thank-you to <http://www.house.gov/roybal-allard/contact.shtml>. A special thanks to our friends at US Airways Government Affairs Committee for helping us out with this effort and to collect signatures. -- Submitted by MEC Government Affairs Chair Albert Garcia

PBS PROBLEM WORKSHEET NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

In order for our members to stay engaged in the PBS improvement process, we ask that you submit comments and suggestions regarding PBS to your union representatives. To make it easier to submit comments and suggestions, your MEC, with the help of DTW flight attendant Frank Slitti, has created an online PBS Problem Worksheet as a way to identify problems with PBS and develop a database that will help us improve PBS bidding issues. The online PBS Problem Worksheet will be launched this week, and we urge everyone to use the handy form to specify problems you are having with PBS. Be sure to include as many details and specific examples as possible. The PBS online form can be found on the home page of the NWA-AFA website or by going to <http://nwaafa.org/onlineforms/pbs>. Information you provide will be given to our PBS Support Team. They will take the information and develop recommendations that will be presented to the Company for implementation. Your MEC would like to thank our members' input and patience as we work to improve bidder satisfaction. Our gratitude also goes out to our PBS volunteers, who will receive your feedback and work for positive change. Keep in mind that if and when we elect to retain union representation at the new Delta, we will have the opportunity to negotiate new parameters for our bidding system.

UNION CONTRACT WORKS FOR YOU AND YOUR UNIFORM

As reported in last week's hotline message, our union and the Company worked together to honor our contractual agreement of NO alteration cost limits on NEW uniform pieces. For flight

attendants who have requested an Alterations Certificate, please contact Lion Uniform Group to obtain an updated certificate. This week, our Local Council 94 representative Daniel Grey worked with SuzAnne Balzer, Director of Contract Administration and Gail Cummings, Director of Inflight Administration, to further exercise our contractual language in [Section 19.1.1](#) that allows pre-merger Northwest flight attendants to use payroll deduction on orders of optional uniform pieces or additional uniform items. Flight attendants at Delta pay for additional/optional uniform orders only by credit card, but our contract provides for payroll deduction. Effective immediately, you may authorize the company to payroll deduct any items ordered from DL uniform catalogue, such as warming sweater, turtleneck, or vest. These optional or any exchanged items will be shipped at the end of February, after shipping of basic ensemble pieces has been completed. Should you have additional uniform-related issues, please contact Tracy Marten at Tracy.Martens@delta.com and your union representatives. A detailed e-mail on uniforms was sent from the company this week, and it will also be available on the ATLAS home page under *What's New*.

JOINT COMPANY AND AFA REMEDY FOR UNNECESSARY DUES DEDUCTIONS

MEC VP Rook and MEC Sec-Treasurer Gehrt met with Company representatives regarding ongoing problems with unnecessary dues deductions for those on long-term leave. After three months of leave, no more dues will be deducted. The Company has agreed to pay out as many extra payments as they can in the 27th paycheck (e.g., Quarterly Incentive Payments, Profit Sharing, Grievance Settlements, etc.). This would effectively stop many of the unnecessary dues deductions for leave participants, since union dues are deducted from the 13th paycheck. Additionally, AFA and the Company have mutually agreed to automatically stop dues deductions for those taking early retirement and early out, so no dues revocation forms will be required. Many thanks to NWA representatives SuzAnne Balzer, Chris Sterling, and Jason Sprynczynatyk for their work on this.

BEWARE OF STOOL PIGEONS AROUND THE SYSTEM

Around the system, reports are coming in regarding anti-union Delta flight attendants who are on special assignment "observing" NW flights and of managers questioning the merits of union representation. Some managers are even requesting that flight attendants remove bag tags or union insignia. On one flight out of HNL on January 21, a special-assignment Delta flight attendant boarded on the pretext of observing our LOD and interpreter program, but then spent the better part of the flight questioning our flight attendants about our union and advocating against representation. She even went so far as to ask for their personal email addresses. For your protection, we have provided some documents that you can use when you find yourself in these uncomfortable and inappropriate situations. Please carry and use these documents from AFA Legal: [Interference Form](#) and Legal Do's and Don'ts posted on www.deltaafa.org and in the Legal Library on www.nwaafa.org. Please report any incidents of this nature to your union officers immediately, so evidence may be collected to be presented to the National Mediation Board. Brace yourself; this is just one part of Delta management's much used union busting strategy: http://nwaafa.org/docs/AirInExecs_NoUnion081.pdf.

NWA-AFA MASTER EXECUTIVE COUNCIL SEEKS SECRETARY-TREASURER

The MEC is currently seeking candidates to serve as its Secretary-Treasurer. The qualified candidate will review and maintain the monthly budget expenditures provided by the AFA International Office and assist the President in the administration of MEC funds. Additional duties include, but are not limited to: maintaining MEC records, keeping meeting minutes, monitoring membership rosters and seniority lists, maintaining files of Base monthly scheduling information, and administrating MEC Committees.

Our current MEC Secretary-Treasurer, Mark Gehrt, will be participating in the Company early-out program. We would like to thank him for his dedication and hard work on behalf of our membership. We wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors.

If you are interested in being considered for MEC Secretary-Treasurer, please send a letter of interest with a resume to Karen Chapdelaine, Association of Flight Attendants, Master Executive Council, 8011 34th Avenue South, Suite 220, Bloomington, MN 55425, or email to kchapdelaine@nwaafa.org. For a complete description of the duties of MEC Secretary-Treasurer, please refer to the [AFA-CWA Constitution and Bylaws Article VII, 2\(c\)](#) or go to the [Committees tab](#) on NWA-AFA website for the open job announcement. The deadline for all submissions is February 10, 2009.

UNION MEETING AND BENEFITS INFORMATION ON YOUTUBE

Studies from 2007 have shown that up to 90 million American households had difficulty paying medical expenses. AFA senior benefits attorney Mary Lou Savage has made numerous presentations on medical and retirement benefits comparisons. If you've missed any of her informative sessions, a DTW-based member filmed some of these sessions and has kindly made them available on his *YouTube* channel so we can all learn about benefits that matter to many of us. The current economic state and high cost of healthcare should make us more vigilant to understand and protect our benefits. To watch the medical presentation or LEC 94 membership meeting, please go to [want2keepmyvoice](#) on YouTube. Many thanks go out to this LEC 94 member for his generosity and countless hours of hard work in making these footage available to us.

36th ANNUAL AFA-CWA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Based upon member feedback, your Master Executive Council has made available online a number of advance agenda items for this year's Board of Directors Meeting. We have a new password-protected area on our [MEC website](#) where these items can be viewed. Advance agenda items include: 1) a proposal to change our dues rate from \$43 to 1X hourly pay rate; 2) a proposal to eliminate dues requirement for medical leave; 3) proposals that would change how MEC and International Officers are elected; and 4) a proposal that would increase the percentage of dues that goes to all locals. You must register for access to this area of our site.