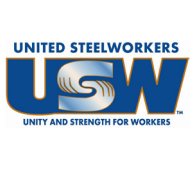

For release Jan. 30, 2012

Unions Call on Congress to Pass Clean FAA Reauthorization

'Rewriting decades of labor law without debate or discussion sets a dangerous precedent'

Washington, D.C. — Following is a statement by 19 unions calling for passage of a clean FAA Reauthorization, without drastic and unnecessary changes to the Railway Labor Act:

The unions are UAW; Communications Workers of America; Association of Flight Attendants-CWA; International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; American Federation of Government Employees; International Association of Machinists; National Education Association; Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen-IBT; Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees-IBT; Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen; Service Employees Local 32BJ-National Conference of Fireman and Oilers; Sheet Metal Workers; United Steelworkers; Teamsters; American Train Dispatchers Association; Transportation Communications Union-IAM; Amalgamated Transit Union; United Transportation Union; UniteHere.

We remain strongly committed to passage of a clean FAA Reauthorization bill. An aviation safety and security bill is no place to impose unrelated and controversial labor provisions that will ultimately serve to harm both airline and railroad workers. The proposed Railway Labor Act changes would drastically rewrite a statute that was crafted by labor-management cooperation and has not been changed for over 75 years without the agreement of both employer and employee representatives. Airline and rail workers would suffer significant losses as contracts are jettisoned, collective bargaining rights are cut and legal hurdles will be placed in the way of gaining a voice at work.

A rewrite of long standing labor law deserves proper and due consideration through the normal deliberative process. Acting otherwise directly conflicts with the non-partisan recommendations of the 1994 Report of the Dunlop Commission on the Future of Worker-Management Relations. This is particularly true of this law which was uniquely created through labor and management negotiations. Unilaterally changing that law without labor's input and without due deliberation threatens to unravel its carefully balanced goals of labor stability and uninterrupted commerce.

Rewarding the House Republican Leadership's desire to rewrite decades of long standing labor law in a flash by inserting an unrelated and controversial labor provision in a much needed aviation safety and security bill, without notice, hearing, or debate, sets an extremely dangerous precedent. We urge the Senate to delete the provisions of the bill that would amend the RLA and pass the clean FAA Reauthorization that all concerned recognize this country sorely needs and supports.

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