

New York Paycheck Victory

The value of an IAM contract was on prominent display in a recent ruling from the New York State Department of Labor (DOL), settling a dispute over how often IAM members at Northwest Airlines in New York would be paid.

The dispute began when Delta management, following Delta's acquisition of Northwest, notified IAM Local 1894 members at Kennedy and LaGuardia airports that Northwest employees would be paid every two

weeks, to bring them in line with Delta employees. Northwest's IAM members in New York State are paid weekly, in accordance with their contract and New York State law.

Delta requested a waiver from the New York State DOL to pay Northwest employees less frequently. However, under New York State law, if the affected employees are represented by a union, a waiver cannot be granted unless their union agrees.

The IAM Legal Department notified the New York State DOL that the Machinists Union would not agree to any waiver. In late December, the New York State DOL ordered Delta to continue paying Northwest IAM members as they have always been paid, on a weekly basis. In the absence of a legally-binding contract, Delta would be free to set wages, benefits and working conditions as they see fit, without any input from employees.



IAM members of Local 1894 in New York celebrate after the IAM stopped Delta Air Lines' attempt to change their long-standing weekly pay schedule. From left, Randy Milteer, Dave Chiello, Don Pollicino, Victor Rossi, Jay Robinson, Kenneth Tsui, Charlie Harris, Fred Dallas, Ernie Goldstein and Eric Torres.



Bill Burke, Page One Photography

At a hearing before the House Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law, IAM Transportation GVP Robert Roach, Jr., right, calls for bankruptcy reform to better protect workers when companies declare bankruptcy and demand concessions from their employees.

IAM Calls for Bankruptcy Law Changes

Transportation GVP Robert Roach, Jr., testified before the House Subcommittee on Commercial and Administrative Law and called for changes to bankruptcy laws that have been used to extract massive concessions from workers while restricting their right to employ the self-help provisions in the Railway Labor Act.

“If employees are called upon to sacrifice in order to res-

urrect their bankrupt employer, then bankruptcy laws must require that everyone from the breakroom to the boardroom share the pain,” said Roach at the hearing titled *Protecting Employees in Airline Bankruptcies*. “In recent airline bankruptcies, much of the financial sacrifices made by employees were diverted into the pockets of the people responsible for the company’s failure.”

The Machinists are calling for bankruptcy reform that would allow airline workers the right to engage in self-help if the bankruptcy court terminates their collective bargaining agreement. “The right to self-help fosters good-faith bargaining by ensuring that the bargaining parties understand the consequences of failing to reach a negotiated agreement,” said Roach.

High-Speed Rail Gets \$8 Billion Boost

A new \$8 billion high-speed rail plan covering 13 corridors in 31 states, including California, the Pacific Northwest, the Northeast corridor and the Gulf Coast, will create thousands of U.S. jobs and add a much-needed boost to domestic manufacturing.

“Our goal is to develop a national high-speed rail network, create good jobs here in America and help reinvigorate our manu-

facturing base,” said Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood.

“If we’re going to really save this industry and commit to high-speed rail, what we have to do first is have a workforce and a management team that understands each other’s value, and then we tackle it as partners,” said IAM President Tom Buffenbarger, who joined LaHood at a conference announcing the plan.



AP/World Wide Photo

The Obama administration’s \$8 billion investment in high-speed rail will mean more jobs and better service for America’s rail passengers.