



*Transportation GVP Robert Roach, Jr. testified before the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee about the need to protect employee pensions in any airline consolidation.*

## A Shake Up in the Wings

Less than a year out of bankruptcy, US Airways rocked the aviation industry with an unsolicited takeover bid for the much larger Delta Airlines, itself mired in bankruptcy since September 2005. While the \$10 billion proposal failed to sway Delta's creditors, many viewed it as the opening round in a series of potential mergers that could radically transform the air transport industry.

"The merger of two or more carriers is not a simple process," warned Transportation GVP Robert Roach, Jr., who cited American Airlines' acquisition of TWA in 2001 and the still incomplete pairing of US Airways and America West as examples.

Appearing before the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, Roach called on lawmakers to oppose any additional acquisitions by US Airways until the carrier negotiates agreements with the IAM to integrate maintenance and fleet personnel at US Airways and America West.

"In the midst of an incomplete merger, US Airways made a \$10 billion bid for Delta Airlines," said Roach. "It is the financial sacrifices of US Airways employees that made that bid possible and their concerns deserve to be addressed before the carrier embarks on another deal."

Airline employees have good reason to be skeptical of

a merger's promised benefits.

In 2001, when American purchased TWA out of bankruptcy, American Airlines CEO Donald Carty made commitments to integrate TWA employees and promised to maintain TWA's hub operations in St. Louis. Today, the majority of TWA employees are no longer working in the industry and St. Louis is down from 300 flights per day to less than 100.

"Proposed mergers must also be scrutinized to ensure that employees' hard earned pensions are preserved," testified Roach, who urged the Senate committee to consider whether any merger could result in the termination of an employee pension plan.

## District 141 Marks 60 Years

From humble beginnings in 1946 when union leaders successfully negotiated a 40-hour work week, to the pitched battles in bankruptcy court during the past decade, District 141 has always been where the action is.

Looking back during the District's annual convention held recently in Phoenix, AZ, current President Randy Canale paid homage to the more than one million members who weathered strikes, lockouts and presidential intervention over the past 60 years to forge a record of achievement that stands tall in the annals of labor history.

"Every generation in this union has been tested, from the strikes of the 1960's to the Lorenzo-like tactics of today's CEO's who take their carriers in and out of bankruptcy," said Canale. "With few exceptions, airline executives have tried to weaken

us at every opportunity, but we're still here, still standing and getting stronger."

Canale expressed optimism about the future despite the litany of challenges still facing airline workers. "In some ways, the situation is improving," said Canale. "For the first time since 1999, none of our carriers are in bankruptcy and we're on the way to taking back what was stolen from us through unfair bankruptcy proceedings."

With 36 local lodges in the continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico, District 141 features a diverse mix of more than 25,000 members.

Using a variety of committees, District 141 also promotes community service, membership education and political involvement in addition to maintaining a comprehensive newsletter and an award winning website at [www.iam141.org](http://www.iam141.org).



## IAM Demands Back Pay For Amtrak Workers

Since Amtrak's creation in 1970, the IAM has helped the carrier in its annual battle for adequate funding. New legislation in Congress would provide a more stable six-year funding plan for the rail carrier. But after seven years without a new contract for 800 IAM members who repair Amtrak trains, the IAM's support is not automatic.

"The IAM wants Amtrak to continue providing our nation with essential rail service, but our members deserve a fair contract," said GVP Roach. "The IAM will only support funding Amtrak if there are sufficient funds to conclude our negotiations and provide our members with full back pay."



*More than 150 local lodge delegates traveled to Phoenix, AZ from as far away as Puerto Rico, Hawaii and Alaska to hold their annual convention and commemorate District 141's 60th Anniversary.*