

Contact: Joseph Tiberi, IAMAW
301-967-4554 (office)
301-529-9341 (mobile)
jtiberi@iamaw.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Machinists Union Opposes Proposal to Cripple Voting Rights in FAA Funding Bill

Washington, D.C., January 24, 2012 – Sito Pantoja, General Vice President of Transportation for the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) today issued the following statement criticizing a Congressional proposal that provides long-term Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) funding at the expense of airline and rail workers' rights to join unions:

“While the Machinists Union supports FAA reauthorization and the vital infrastructure investments it will provide, the Machinists strongly oppose the flawed labor proposal that jeopardizes the independence of the National Mediation Board (NMB).

The proposal imposes Congressionally-mandated standards for union representation elections and oversight that have always been up to independent federal labor authorities to decide.

Holding a much-need FAA bill hostage, as Republicans have done for months, is inexcusable. The IAM urges Congress to pass a clean FAA reauthorization bill that does not include politically motivated provisions that only serve to hurt American workers.”

Included in the FAA Reauthorization bill are changes to the Railway Labor Act, the federal labor law covering airline and railroad workers, which would require the support of at least 50 percent of an employee group before a union representation election could be held. Currently, there is no statutory requirement, but National Mediation Board policy sets a 35 percent threshold. Other private sector workers who fall under the National Labor Relations Act need only 30 percent to trigger an election.

While the proposal requires the NMB to hold public hearings before changing its rules, this very proposal imposes new standards on the NMB without the benefit of any such public hearing.

The IAM is the largest air and rail union in North America. More information about the IAM is available at www.goiam.org.