

UNION VICTORY

The recent decision by the National Mediation Board (NMB) to expand voting rights for air and rail workers is being called the most significant change to U.S. labor law in more than 60 years. The NMB ruling covers more than 500,000 transportation workers in all 50 states.

Under the new rule, transportation workers would no longer be forced to meet unfair participation thresholds, a requirement used by companies to defeat organizing campaigns that would have otherwise succeeded.

Elections for air and rail workers will henceforth be decided by a simple majority of those voters who choose to cast ballots. Under the old rule, a worker who did not cast a ballot was considered to be a "no" vote.

The NMB ruling comes just as the airline industry is preparing for yet another round of uncertainty and consolidation. Union-represented employees at four of the largest U.S carriers could soon face representation elections in the wake of mergers in varying stages of completion.

Collective bargaining agreements that provide pension plans, good wages, health care coverage and retiree benefits could be lost under the old rules if less than 50 percent of a given classification participated in an election to determine representation at the combined carrier.

The new voting guidelines allows employees who choose to cast ballots to determine the outcome of the election, just like local, state and national election in the U.S.

To no one's surprise, Delta Air Lines is leading an all out effort to block the new voting rules, while it continues an aggressive anti-union campaign that includes, threats, intimidation, surveillance and harassment of union supporters.

Have you heard?

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