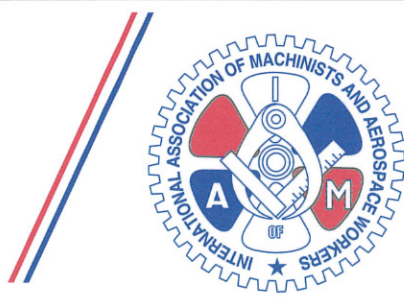


**International
Association of
Machinists and
Aerospace Workers**



9000 Machinists Place
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772-2687

Area Code 301
967-4500



OFFICE OF THE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

April 5, 2016

Dear Senator,

On behalf of the largest airline union in North America and the thousands of airline customer service representatives that we proudly represent, we strongly urge you to support the inclusion of language in Senate FAA Reauthorization bill that mirrors the “Assault on Customer Service” amendment that was offered by Representative John Garamendi and adopted by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. The provision included in H.R. 4441 would simply apply the same law for assaulting flight crew members to an airline customer service representative, including a gate or ticket agent while on duty.

Across the country, customer service representatives are being physically assaulted on a daily basis. Some have been kneed and punched in the face; some have had to dodge projectile luggage, and others have had their clothes torn. Airline passengers who are upset about paying more for airline tickets, lost luggage, flight delays and cancellations are taking their frustrations out on innocent airline workers who are simply trying to do their job. Their injuries in some cases are life altering.

Currently, federal law that protects flight crews does NOT apply to customer service representatives. They deserve the same protection against hostile passengers. Instead of having clarity in our laws, local jurisdictions decide when or if to prosecute perpetrators or whether to report an incident in the first place. A simple solution would be to allow federal law that addresses assaults on flight crew members to also apply to assaults on airline customer service representatives. These airlines workers need and deserve equal treatment under the law.

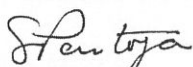
Under current federal law, it is illegal to interfere with a pilot or flight attendant’s ability to perform his or her job. This same statute also creates stricter sentencing guidelines for cases involving assaults on flight crew members. The provision agreed to in the House FAA bill via voice vote would expand this law to include customer service representatives without any cost to the airline passenger or commercial airlines. It would also send an important message to workers that we are not turning a blind eye to these assaults and would act as a deterrent for violent behavior toward all airline workers.

Unfortunately, the Senate Commerce Committee’s version of the FAA bill does NOT include this important provision. Rather, the Senate’s version of the bill requires the federal government to conduct a study on the problem. We do not need more federal studies while these airline workers are routinely getting physically assaulted. The Senate study needs to be scrapped and

the House provision need to be included in the Senate FAA bill when it is considered.
Hopefully, American airline workers can count on your support.

If you have any questions, please contact Legislative Director Hasan Solomon at (202) 420-5902
or hsolomon@iamaw.org

Sincerely,



Sito Pantoja

General Vice President, Transportation, IAM