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Office of the International President

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Dear Senator:

On behalf of the 600,000 active and retired members of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM Union), I write to **urge you to cosponsor and support S. 844, the bipartisan “Faster Labor Contracts Act.”** It is an urgently needed piece of labor reform that will end unfair delays in reaching a first contract for new unions, thereby ensuring that when workers exercise their legally protected right to vote to form a union, a collective bargaining agreement follows in a timely manner. Sen. Josh Hawley (R-Mo.) is the lead sponsor of S. 844, which he introduced alongside Sens. Bernie Moreno (R-OH), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Gary Peters (D-MI), and Jeff Merkley (D-OR). Its companion measure, H.R. 5408—another bipartisan effort, introduced and championed by Representative Donald Norcross (D-NJ)—passed the House in June of this year.

Collective bargaining is a fundamental right guaranteed to most private-sector workers in the United States through the National Labor Relations Act (the Act). The right of workers to form a union and collectively bargain is central to improving their wages, hours, working conditions, and other terms and conditions of employment. Once workers vote to form a union, they begin negotiating an initial contract with their employer. **But the process of negotiating this first contract does not have any time frame under the law**—so undue tactical delay can hinder the process and leave workers fighting for years to obtain this first agreement. This makes workers lose faith in the legal process that is supposed to enfranchise their rights to be heard by their employers. The IAM has seen the results of these delay tactics first-hand: workers grow frustrated and believe that their voice is being ignored while their protected right to form a union is ultimately a fiction.

That is why the Faster Labor Contracts Act is so important. It will amend the Act to include timelines for meetings to begin negotiations, mediating if the parties are stuck, and have a binding arbitration panel to ensure a first contract is secured.

We urge you to cosponsor and support this critical labor reform legislation. Doing so will help ensure workers’ voices are heard at a pivotal point in their legally protected path toward workplace representation. **While additional reforms are needed, S. 844 is an essential first step toward protecting workers’ rights.**

For more information, please reach out to IAM National Legislative and Political Director Hasan Solomon at (202) 420-5902 or hsolomon@iamaw.org.

Sincerely,

Brian Bryant
IAM International President