



ASSOCIATION OF FLIGHT ATTENDANTS - CWA, AFL-CIO
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Ladies and Gentlemen:

We do not want to strike, but we will to save our airline.

United management has forced us to the brink of a strike by their actions: after almost 30 months in bankruptcy the destructive path that this management team has placed us on has not, by any standard, solved what ails United.

It is very telling that even if increased fuel costs were taken out of the equation United would still have lost money last year. That's a powerful indictment of this management team. They have extracted billions in concessions from United's employees; they halted pension funding contributions; they were turned down three times by the ATSB for a government loan guarantee due to a critically flawed business plan; they fouled up the negotiations with two of their five United Express partners; they failed to reach an agreement with the holder of a significant number of aircraft; the list goes on and on. But they still haven't figured out how to run an airline.

Despite this leadership vacuum, we have done our part to ensure industry-leading service records and bring passengers back to our airline.

One common thread connects the long, sad saga of this bankruptcy and the endless series of failed plans and missed opportunities that have plagued our airline: an incompetent team of executives more focused on punishing cuts for employees than on devising a viable business plan.

The point is, these executives have not been able to execute on their own immediate term plans, never mind putting together a credible plan of reorganization for the long-term survival of our airline. If this management team remains at the helm of our airline, and if they unilaterally alter or abrogate our Contract, we will strike. We will strike to save our airline, and to prevent this management team from destroying it.

United management must go.

The United Airlines Board of Directors has choices to make that will determine the path this airline takes: replace current management with a competent team of executives, or face a strike. Hands off our pensions and our Contract, or face a strike. We *will* strike to save our airline. The choice is their's.

The company is on the verge of unilaterally altering our Contract through the bankruptcy process. A strike is the legally equivalent response to the rejection of our Contract. Striking is a form of "self-help," and the courts have recognized that the Railway Labor Act (RLA) gives strikers options that are not available to workers in other industries, such as the right to engage in intermittent strikes (like CHAOS™) and secondary picketing.

Our legal right to strike will be triggered if *management imposes changes to the terms of our Contract or terminates our pension plan*. Unilateral changes to a Contract are prohibited by the Railway Labor Act (RLA). Our response will be in the form of CHAOS strikes or other work actions.

United's lawyers and media spokespeople have made absurd statements regarding Flight Attendants' legal right to strike in the event our Contract is abrogated. They rely on a court case that doesn't even apply to the airlines – a case decided under the National Labor Relations Act, not the RLA. And, they ignore the leading case on the issue of CHAOS: *AFA v. Alaska Airlines*. The *Alaska* decision specifically rejects what the Company's lawyers have peddled to the media.

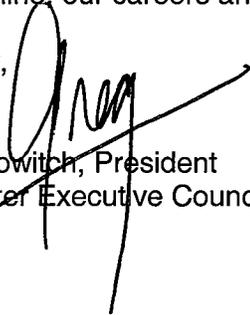
While the case law supports our right to strike, no strike is without risk. Even with the *AFA v. Alaska Airlines* decision clearly in our favor there's always a risk that a different court could reach a different result, even based on similar facts applied to the same law. Each striker should weigh the risks of the actions they take when called upon by the Union to engage in a CHAOS strike, and make their own decision that the importance of the issues we are fighting for outweighs the risks involved. AFA will vigorously defend the rights of all strikers and participants in CHAOS activity.

Management relies on misinformation to disrupt our plans and shake the resolve of the Flight Attendants. Professor Douglas Baird of the University of Chicago law school has called United's position "preposterous" and "ridiculous." United's position – that they can change our Contract and we are not permitted to strike in response – violates a fundamental principle: in America, workers cannot be forced to work under terms that they have not agreed to. As we have said before, we're not aware of a Contract in this country where one party breaks the terms of the agreement and the other party continues to perform.

We are prepared to defend our Pension Plan before the bankruptcy court tomorrow and throughout this week. Our grassroots legislative campaign bolstered our efforts to save our pensions as members of Congress formally supported our legal position today. Jan Schakowsky of Illinois and George Miller of California filed an amicus brief arguing before the court against the agreement between United Airlines and the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation. They stating in the brief, "this Agreement flies in the face of what Congress intended by both Section 1113 and ERISA's plan termination insurance program." On the first day return from a recess in the Senate, seventeen Senators signed a letter addressed to the PBGC Board of Directors with regard to its reversed position from defending the viability of our Flight Attendant Pension Plan to agreeing to termination for a price. The letter demands an immediate response from the Board and an explanation of the deal with United Airlines. For those of you who are unable to attend the court proceedings this week, we will keep you closely advised through all AFA communication channels.

We are confident that we will stand together in solidarity, fully informed, and committed to standing up against the abuses of United management. We don't want to strike but we will. We will strike to save our airline, our careers and our Contract.

In Solidarity,



Greg Davidowitch, President
United Master Executive Council