

U.S. Rep. Pocan: Fights for Air Wisconsin flight attendants' wages

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WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Representative **Mark Pocan (WI-02)** led a letter on behalf of Air Wisconsin flight attendants, represented by the Association of Flight Attendants-Communication Workers of America (AFA-CWA), urging the National Mediation Board (NMB) to give fair consideration to AFA-CWA's request to advance the contract negotiation process.

The Air Wisconsin flight attendants' wages have been frozen since 2007, and after negotiating contracts for almost four years, and over two years in mediation, the flight attendants voted to authorize a strike in November of 2018. However, due to restrictions in the Railway Labor Act, the NMB is the only body that can intervene and progress negotiations to allow for arbitration or subsequently a strike. Despite repeated requests from the AFA, the NMB has failed to take action.

“Air Wisconsin flight attendants are trapped in poverty wages as their voices are ignored by executives at Air Wisconsin and United Airlines,” said **Rep. Mark Pocan**. “Four years of contract negotiations and over a decade of stagnant wages is not good faith bargaining, it's not even good management. When workers organize and vote to strike, they deserve to exercise that right. The National Mediation Board must take action to allow these negotiations to progress. Anything less is inadequate and does not do justice to the hard work of flight attendants that keeps airline passengers safe each and every day.”

“There is no excuse for the pace or length of negotiations with Air Wisconsin, said **Sara Nelson, AFA International President**. While contracts do not expire under the Railway Labor Act, the statute has clear parameters to move to a strike deadline when the parties are no longer moving toward an agreement. It has been two years since this management made any movement in negotiations, even with

the assistance of federal mediators. Flight Attendants meanwhile are earning poverty wages and often can't afford a place to live. The National Mediation Board needs to move forward as the law intended to bring negotiations to a close. The Association of Flight Attendants-CWA thanks Representative Pocan and all of the co-signers for calling on the agency to follow the law and bring these negotiations to a close."

The letter was also signed by Linda T. Sánchez (D-CA), Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC), Susan Wild (D-PA), Norma Torres (D-CA), Alan Lowenthal (D-CA), Betty McCollum (D-MN), Marcy Kaptur (D-OH), Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), Jared Huffman (D-CA), Andy Levin (D-MI), Angie Craig (D-MN), Gwen Moore (D-WI), Mark Desaulnier (D-CA), Deb Haaland (D-NM), Peter A. Defazio (D-OR), Pramila Jayapal (D-WA), Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ), Ilhan Omar (D-MN), Chris Pappas (D-NH), Jesús G. "Chuy" García (D-IL), Rashida Tlaib (D-MI), Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Rick Larsen (D-WA), Ted W. Lieu (D-CA).