

Debrief

AFA Debrief – March 23, 2023

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- Welcome Class 2023!

Flight Attendants Advocate on Capitol Hill on FAA Reauthorization

The week of March 6, 2023 more than 60 Flight Attendant activists from airlines across our Union were in Washington, D.C. for Government Affairs 101 training and meetings with lawmakers to advance our careers. Flight Attendants talked with Congress and urged them to work swiftly to support our Flight Attendant priorities in the upcoming FAA Reauthorization Bill.

With that goal in mind we met with the offices of Congressmen/women and Senators. Some of the priorities for our Union are:

- Stopping the Flag of Convenience Air Carriers - A “Flag of Convenience” business model permits airlines to establish operations in countries with lower labor standards. The AFA-CWA supports legislation that would prohibit “flag of convenience” practices from expanding to the aviation sector industry.
- Ending Disruptive Passenger Abuse and Violent Incidences on Airplanes - Create a banned passenger list to be maintained by the TSA so that passengers banned for such behaviors are banned on every carrier. Legislation is necessary in order for this to be enacted. Also included in this Act would be a ban on to-go alcohol and require alcohol signage. Most passengers are unaware that by federal regulations they can be denied boarding if they appear intoxicated. The Bill would also direct the TSA to require a mandatory, advanced defense training program for air cabin crew members. This includes classroom and hands on training courses tailored for use in passenger aircraft. It would also require airlines to compensate crew members for their time attending the training program. The request also includes that the fines collected by the FAA from disruptive passengers be used to create a health and wellness fund that flight crews and passenger service agents can access to offset the cost of their medical bills, additional time off if needed, counseling, time spent testifying in court against their assailant.

- Every passenger needs their own seat: eliminate the exemption for lap children - The FAA currently permits children under two years old to sit unbelted on their parents laps. The FAA, NTSB and independent researchers have all concluded that this is dangerous citing studies showing that lap children are at a higher risk of injuries caused by everything from falling from laps, turbulence and trauma incurred in a crash.
- Smoke/fume event training and reporting - Cabin Air Safety Act of 2022 (being reintroduced in the 118th Congress) to direct the FAA to issue regulations requiring: airline worker training to document fume events, suitable sensors on aircraft to detect a variety of contaminants and fumes in real time and investigate bleed air events. The legislation also mandates that airlines provide flight crew, maintenance technicians and emergency response teams training on how to respond and identify the causes of fume events.

Other Flight Attendant priorities as a part of the FAA Reauthorization Bill include:

- Oppose any efforts to expand preemption
- Establish commercial aircraft temperature standards, collect data and report findings
- Reform DOT marijuana testing protocols
- Update aircraft emergency evacuation standards
- Require airlines to educate Flight Attendants on the risks of radiation exposure
- Require naloxone nasal spray to be in the EMK kits
- Require the FAA to provide guidance and regulations for pumping (lactation) while on duty
- Reduce carbon emissions from aircraft by supporting tax credits and R & D programs that encourage the use of Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF)
- Support recycling and green infrastructure airport programs.

We are grateful to our flying partners Monique Pfenninger and Colleen Donnellan-Dyer, both from Council 7 LHR, who shared the experience of their work on Capitol Hill while in Washington D.C.

Marginal Service Reports

With the recent increased workload onboard our aircraft, we know that reducing staffing levels or eliminating certain positions, can result in longer wait times for passengers to receive their meals, drinks, and other services. This can lead to increased frustration and dissatisfaction among passengers and may result in a decreased level of service quality.

Furthermore, when fewer crew members are available to handle emergencies or other safety-related incidents, the response time to such incidents may be slower, potentially putting the safety of passengers and crew at risk.

In addition, changes to staffing and service may also impact crew fatigue levels, which can negatively impact safety. For example, longer duty periods and shorter rest periods can lead to increased fatigue, which can impair crew members' ability to respond to safety-related situations.

We all want a return to a service we can be proud of and aligns with our mutual goal to be the best airline in the world. However, it's important that if we have constructive feedback about difficulties or challenges, we encounter, we need to provide that information and suggestions to our Union to advocate for the change that will realistically align the service with the goals that management has set to provide a premium experience to our passengers.

As we work to meet these goals, we encourage you to provide specific information on the marginal service conditions that exist. Using the *Reports & Forms* section of our MEC website, file a [Marginal Service Report](#) which will provide the MEC Officers with specific information that can be used in our discussions with management as we continue to advocate for change to the Established Staffing Guidelines in light of the increased service levels on our flights.

Therefore, it is important for crew members to provide detailed, specific information on how the staffing and recent increased service changes have adversely impacted passenger safety and service. This can help our Union assess the impact of the changes and take appropriate action to address with the company any safety or service concerns.

AFA Welcomes Class 2304!

On behalf of your Union, we would like to extend a warm welcome to the newest Members of our Flight Attendant family. We are thrilled to have the new flying partners on board, and we look forward to working together to ensure that our airline remains one of the best in the industry.

Our newest flying partners will begin their careers at Domiciles in EWR and SFO. Their professionalism, in-depth understanding of our experiences, and eagerness to be part of our community were all sources of encouragement for us. We firmly believe that these new members will enhance our profession with their unique talents and abilities, thereby strengthening our collective expertise. Please join us in welcoming them to our ranks as they join us on the line next week.

Please remember that our newest Members are on probation. To ensure that they receive the most accurate information to support them, direct them to their AFA Local Council for assistance on Contractual issues.

We encourage you to welcome each of them, help them learn from your experience, and get them started on a path to success and adventure in their new career.

Reminders:

MAR – Women’s History Month

MAR 23 (noon CST) – CQ Rebalancing Bids Close

MAR 26 – Europe Change to Daylight Saving Time

APR 6 – CQ Rebalancing Awards Posted

APR 30 – The Joe Beirne Foundation CWA Scholarship Deadline

