



Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, AFL-CIO
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Association of Professional Flight Attendants
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January 10, 2019
The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. President, Madam Speaker, and Leader McConnell:

Flight Attendants across the industry ask you to end the shutdown now. This is a matter of safety, security, and economic concern.

We serve as the last line of defense in aviation security. On September 11, 2001 we lost our friends and colleagues while our profession changed forever. Security is a layered approach and those of us on the frontlines count on the full operation of DHS, CBP, TSA, DOT, and FAA to conduct full cyber security work, hands on security inspection, assessment of individuals at all points of entry to our country and airspace, regular inspection of our safety procedures, and continued training and certification for workforce and infrastructure. Our members and the traveling public are flying within a system that is less safe and secure as long as the shutdown continues.

We know all too well the economic hardship that can result from any loophole in our security and any means for inflicting harm by those who view the United States and its citizens as the enemy. Our industry contributes over five percent to our nation's GDP and supports 11 million jobs. As the shutdown continues the entire industry will begin to unravel. Airlines cannot receive delivery of aircraft causing route cancellations, attrition of air traffic controllers reduces flow of aircraft in the air, and as transportation security officers reduce in numbers we will experience long, slowed security lines. Communities will lose service and as capacity is cut many across the industry, including Flight Attendants, could experience job loss.

Our country relies heavily on the full capacity of our airline industry, and the government workforce that makes it run. We are in awe of the transportation security officers, air traffic controllers, and other workers deemed as essential employees for their patriotism in coming to work without the certainty of a paycheck or any resolution to this shutdown. Even in private bankruptcies where workers suffer economic cuts, the first day order of business is court approval to continue the payroll because it is understood the business cannot run if the workforce cannot count on a paycheck. The longer this shutdown continues, the more likely it is that workers will be forced to find other means to care for their families. Even before that, we need these frontline safety and security personnel to be wholly focused on their mission, rather than the stress of uncertainty in providing for their families.

End this shutdown. Do not put Flight Attendants, other aviation workers, and the traveling public at risk any longer. Border security is an important issue and it deserves a fulsome solution. Please return our government to full capacity now, and continue your discussions once that is done. We cannot sacrifice critical safety, security, and economic stability in the airline industry as another area of national security is discussed.

Sincerely,

Sara Nelson
International President
Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, AFL-CIO

Lori Bassani
National President
Association of Professional Flight Attendants