

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS

JAMES P. HOFFA
General President

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April 2, 2020

The Honorable Steven T. Mnuchin
Secretary
United States Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Secretary Mnuchin,

I am writing to you on behalf of the more than 85,000 Teamsters working in aviation. Earlier this week, the President noted in a tweet the efforts of Teamster-represented Atlas pilots, who are flying tons of medical supplies to the places that most need them. Last week, America's aviation workers won a huge victory in the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act of 2020* (CARES Act) that should be the model for how we deal with the entire economic crisis caused by COVID-19. Under the provisions that the Teamsters and other unions fought to have included, the federal government will pay the wages, salaries, and benefits of more than two million airline and airport workers, most of whom were facing layoffs or furloughs due to the near total collapse of air travel in this country.

The CARES Act ensures that pilots, flight attendants, gate agents, and mechanics, as well as airline caterers and cleaners -- all groups the Teamsters represent -- will continue to receive a paycheck and benefits. It keeps the entire industry out of the unemployment line, on the tax rolls, on our health care, and on the job so that we're ready to get the American economy moving again as soon as the "all clear" sounds.

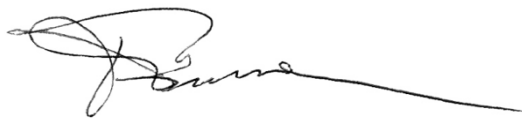
As the Treasury Department begins to issue guidance for employers who wish to apply for these funds, it must ensure that any loans extended to carriers or contractors include lock-tight protections for existing collective bargaining agreements, mirroring the protections provided to grant funds under Section 4115 of the CARES Act. These protections, as well as additional prohibitions on furloughs, layoffs, or wage reductions, should also be extended not just through the end of September 30th 2020, but through the termination of the use of those funds by the recipient.

We have heard concerns from Teamster airline employers about a provision in the bill which gives the Secretary the authority to take an ownership stake in the airlines in exchange for any funds that keep workers on payroll (Sec. 4117). While we understand these concerns as described, Aviation workers are also taxpayers. When the public steps in to keep companies afloat, we deserve concrete assurances that these funds will be used in the public interest, and not solely in the best interests of the corporate boardroom. But we also recognize this crisis and its impact on workers and the economy is unprecedented. I urge you to continue engaging in good faith negotiations with airline employers voicing their concerns about Sec. 4117. We believe that the framework authorized under the CARES Act gives you sufficient authority to strike the necessary balance on this issue and provide desperately needed relief for millions of American workers.

Teamsters and other union members have been on the front lines of fighting this pandemic from the very beginning. In the midst of a global public health crisis, we've helped millions of Americans return to their homes to shelter. We've assisted the federal government in delivering critical medical supplies to healthcare workers on the front lines caring for coronavirus patients. Under the terms of the payroll grants program, we will ensure that small and rural communities have access to needed air travel. We will keep healthcare supply chains functioning across the country.

Teamsters represent more than 85,000 of aviation's first responders. We are committed to working with the Administration in this moment of shared national responsibility and are standing by with our entire industry in the country's economic recovery. We thank you for your commitment to protecting our jobs by ensuring federal aid is not leveraged against the working people who are now counting on this assistance to stay out of the unemployment lines.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Bourne", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Capt. David Bourne
Director, Teamsters Airline Division