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Sun Country Pilots Grant Union Authority to Call a Strike

100% Vote “Yes” to Walk if Contract Talks Fail

BLOOMINGTON, Minn – Sun Country Airlines pilots have overwhelmingly voted to authorize their union leaders of the Air Line Pilots Association, Int’l (ALPA) to call a strike if a mutually agreeable contract cannot be reached by the completion of the federally-mediated negotiation process.

A resounding 100 percent of the Sun Country pilots who cast ballots voted in favor of the strike authorization ballot, with 209 of the group’s 216 eligible pilots participating in the balloting.

“After years in negotiations we remain the lowest-paid Boeing 737 pilots in the United States, and we fall further behind our peers year after year,” said Capt. Dennis Vanatta, chair of Sun Country’s ALPA Master Executive Council.

“This vote demonstrates with unmistakable clarity the unity and resolve of this pilot group. We hope that Sun Country management does not underestimate the pilots’ determination to achieve a new labor agreement that recognizes this pilot group deserves to be treated on a par with other airline pilots.”

ALPA and Sun Country began contract talks in April 2010 and began working with a federal mediator from the National Mediation Board (NMB) in May 2012. In order to go on strike, the NMB must first decide that additional mediation efforts would not be productive and extend an offer to arbitrate the dispute. If either side declines arbitration, the parties enter a 30-day "cooling off" period and are free to exercise self-help 30 days later.

“We do not want a strike – we want a contract. But Sun Country's new owners have profited and doubled the size of the airline since negotiations began. The airline industry is enjoying its most prolonged period of success in years, and the time has long passed for management to get this done,” Vanatta said.

Founded in 1931, ALPA is the world's largest pilot union, representing more than 51,000 pilots at 30 airlines in the United States and Canada. Visit the ALPA website at www.alpa.org or follow us on Twitter @WeAreALPA.

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