

Our Time, Our Turn

Since my first magazine column appeared in print



last month, I have been gratified by the communications I have received from so many of you. What has impressed me the most is not that you are wishing me and our union the best, but that many of you are sending me your ideas and constructive critiques, as well as volunteering your support in working to restore our profession. I truly respect those who have

written to tell me that the proof is in what we do, not in what I say. I couldn't agree with you more.

Since my election last October, I have worked with the outgoing officers, the incoming officers, pilot group leaders, and our experienced staff to take up the principles that the Board of Directors endorsed in electing me to change our union's strategic direction. It isn't hard to come up with a list of what we want to do, but it is difficult to narrow the list down to what matters the most.

By the time you read this, you will have attended, heard about, or seen Web coverage of the first few regional pilot road shows in a series we are conducting. If this is news to you, check out Crewroom.alpa.org for a meeting near you. I am using this series of road show events to discuss our current thinking with line pilots and, more importantly, to hear more of

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your thoughts as we begin to drive home our main objectives.

Throughout our discussions during the election and the transition period, we kept returning to one central theme. It's one that we have heard from pilots across our union and adopted for our work in 2007: "We are union pilots, and we're takin' it back."

Most pilots will get this concept right away. Over the last five years, managements and anti-worker politicians have worked overtime to take as much out of our contracts as they could. They used, as anti-union weapons, bankruptcy, oil prices, the Iraq War, and—yes—our concerns in trying to prevent management from completely running our compa-

nies into Chapter 7 liquidation. While Independence Air was liquidated, and furloughs are still deep, ALPA will not stop trying to help our fellow members find new pilot career jobs.

But we are moving in a new direction. The momentum is shifting our way, and we need to work with feverish tenacity to claw back what managements and politicians have taken: our profession, our union, our contracts, our safety and security—in short, our very future. The momen-



tum I speak of is not in Washington; it is growing in the souls of our members who are ready to take our profession back.

To help turn this goal into reality, in early January I asked the Executive Council to approve a vision statement that will undergird all our efforts. I ask you to read it carefully and do all you can to support it:

The Air Line Pilots Association, International, will spare no effort to aggressively fight for the rights and needs of airline pilots. We will work together—across all segments and corporate brands—to restore our proud profession. We are committed to the principle that our profession is best served by unifying all pilots within our union and organizing all pilots within our profession. ALPA pilots must embody the values of solidarity, integrity, and tenacity as we work to accomplish the goals of the union. Leaders commit to identifying and aggressively addressing the concerns, aspirations, and ideas of our members, and leaders will act decisively to move the pilots' agenda forward. When one ALPA pilot has a problem, all ALPA pilots have a problem.

I believe that if we follow the vision statement's tenets, we will succeed. Failure is not an option.

In the coming months, as I am visiting you during road shows, riding in your jumpseat, or walking on your picket line, tell me what you think. You need to play your part. Attend the next local council meeting, find out which local and MEC committees need volunteers and become one, and sign up for ALPA-PAC. Act now. The clock is already ticking in the first quarter. We have the ball. It's our time, our turn.

