

Aviation Week & Space Technology
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Washington, DC 20005

Via email: awsletters@aviationweek.com

Dear Sir:

Mr. Crandall's remarks at The Wings Club ignore the enormous concessions that employees made to save their airlines before the cost of fuel skyrocketed and the shrinking cost of labor relative to overall airline operations (June 11).

Between 2002 and 2011, labor at the seven largest U.S. airlines will have given \$75 billion in concessions. Almost \$30 billion will come from pilots in wages, work rules, and benefits. Terminated pensions totaled another \$5+ billion. In 2008, airline labor costs will be half that of fuel.

Following 9/11, workers rallied to save, not strike, their airlines. Not one strike has occurred, but the right to withdraw their services is the strongest leverage workers have to protect themselves against exploitation. If history is any judge, airline managements defend their own interests, not those of workers, when times get tough.

Mr. Crandall is right on two points. Some measure of regulation must be introduced to stabilize the industry and bankruptcy law must be reformed. Airline management must not be allowed to exploit the law to gut employee contracts, prevent workers from striking, and reward themselves with multi-million-dollar bonuses.

Given fuel forecasts, the need to protect workers' rights could not be more urgent.

Sincerely,

Capt. John Prater
President