



**October 28, 2015 Hotline
APFA Government Affairs Department**

Flight Attendant Fatigue Update

APFA Government Affairs would like to thank our Flight Attendants who have provided valuable input on the challenges endured when faced with inadequate rest. Here is a recap and update on where we are on our efforts on Flight Attendant fatigue. Next year, Congress plans to write and pass a long-term Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bill ("FAA Bill"). This is the law that allows the FAA to operate and generally sets the priorities and direction. The FAA bill provides the best opportunity for long-suffering Flight Attendants to address the debilitating fatigue experienced while on the job. As Congress gets ready to debate the FAA bill, Flight Attendants and supporters are pushing lawmakers to add provisions into the bill that will finally give adequate rest to our workforce.

APFA's Plan to Address Flight Attendant Fatigue

APFA's plan in the upcoming FAA Bill isn't flashy and doesn't have a catchy name. However, it's a clear plan with a history of achieving positive results. APFA has devised a strategy to establish an Aviation Rulemaking Committee (ARC) to examine Flight Attendant fatigue and write new regulations to address it. We believe a science based approach is the best path to success and one that proved successful for the pilots.

An ARC is convened by the FAA and brings in all the various stakeholders affected by a particular issue as well as scientists and technical experts. In the case of Flight Attendant fatigue, we would expect an ARC to include representatives of Flight Attendant Unions, Airlines, Sleep Experts, Medical Professionals, and others. The ARC would examine Crew Scheduling practices, Contract language, the science of sleep and circadian rhythms including the Civil Aeronautic Medical Institute (CAMI) fatigue studies that many Flight Attendants have participated in over the years. Based on this research, the ARC would then recommend a new rule for Flight Attendant rest requirements. The rule would then undergo the standard federal rulemaking process and would finally become an FAA regulation.

Alternative Plans from Other Unions

Other Flight Attendant Unions are pursuing a different strategy which they are calling the "Fight for 10". This strategy is purely legislative and seeks to write new minimum rest times directly into the FAA bill. In APFA's opinion, this strategy is chock-full of potential issues. Our initial

review of the language indicates that it is targeting improvement of layover times for the **regional carriers** and will offer little improvement for our members. In addition, it does not offer any review of our international long haul flying, another important area of fatigue we are seeking to address.

We know that the airline industry is pushing back on the Fight for 10 language. It is very difficult to conduct an open and honest discussion with lawmakers when the various parties meet behind closed doors at different times. Members of Congress are in a position of weighing the various “he said, she said” arguments and, invariably, the most moneyed and influential group wins out.

The "Fight for 10" has the support of many groups of regional Flight Attendants. Given the incredible profits the airline industry is now reaping, it is easy to determine which interest wins out on this debate. In short, Congress has informed us, in no uncertain terms, that the "Fight for 10" proposal is dead on arrival.

Meeting of the Coalition of Flight Attendant Unions

The Coalition of Flight Attendant Unions met in Washington and our concerns with the Fight for 10 proposal were shared along with other member unions. APFA has much more confidence in our strategy that includes a science based approach. While APFA does not oppose the "Fight for 10", we are advocating for the creation of an ARC because of the advantages described above. Though our strategies may differ, we all want the same thing – better rest rules for Flight Attendants who are being pushed to the limit. We have agreed to meet again in order to hopefully reach a consensus that will work for ALL Flight Attendants. Rest assured, we are fighting for you each and every day. When we work together we can accomplish great things.

If you or someone you know would like to join the APFA Government Affairs team, please email us at legislation@apfa.org.

In Unity,

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