



NEGOTIATIONS 2013
Our Contract, Our Customers, Our Future
Transport Workers Union of America, AFL-CIO
Air Transport Division - Local 555
Southwest Airlines Ramp, Operations, Provisioning & Freight Agents



MEDIA ADVISORY

For Immediate Release – March 27, 2013

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Southwest Ground Workers Say Company Demands Will Compromise Customer Service
TWU Local 555 begins Informational Picketing and Leafleting in 16 cities in 12 States on March 28

DALLAS – Members of Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 555, concerned that contract proposals from Southwest Airlines will compromise the company’s tradition of outstanding customer service, will begin information picketing and leafleting on March 28 in 16 airports in twelve states across the country.

Who: Members of TWU 555, Ground Workers at Southwest Airlines

What: Informational Picketing and Leafleting to Inform Passengers of Southwest’s Proposals to Compromise Customer Service

When: Thursday, March 28, 11:30 am to 3:30 pm (Local time in all locations)

Where: Buffalo Int’l Airport; BWI Airport, Baltimore; Chicago Midway Airport, Love Field, Dallas; Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood Int’l Airport; Hobby Airport, Houston; Kansas City International Airport; McCarran International Airport, Las Vegas; LAX, Los Angeles; Nashville International Airport; Oakland International Airport; Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport; Portland (OR) International Airport; Sea-Tac International Airport, Seattle; Tampa International Airport.

“Southwest Airlines is widely recognized as one of the most successful airlines in the industry, with 40 straight years of profitability,” said TWU Local President Charles Cerf. “Our members, who are the most productive airline workers in the industry, play a huge role in the company’s success. The work of ramp, operations, provisioning and freight agents is crucial to flight safety, timely departures and to providing our passengers with Southwest Airlines’ legendary customer service.”

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“We simply can’t understand why management would compromise our tradition of excellence by making demands at the bargaining table to outsource our work, cut into our sick days, and make it harder for our members to be on the job. If we’re not there, who is going to provide our passengers with the quality of service they have come to expect at Southwest?”

“By refusing to reward employees for their contribution to our airlines’ success, management is taking a terrible wrong turn from Southwest Airlines’ past emphasis on putting employees first and maintaining positive labor relations,” said Cerf. “Southwest passengers have a right to know about management’s plan to downgrade the quality of service they receive. That’s why our members will be conducting informational picketing and leafleting in 16 cities across the country on March 28.”

The TWU Local 555 bargaining committee, representing more than 9,400 ground crew workers at Southwest, began negotiations for a new agreement in July, 2011. Talks have stalled, however, due to management demands that would negatively impact customer service and impose unnecessary concessions on members of Local 555.

“TWU Local 555 has been very careful to ensure their proposals do not have a negative impact on Southwest Airlines,” said aviation economist Dan Akins of Logistics Capital and Strategy, who serves as an advisor to TWU. “In its 40th year of profitability, Southwest earned \$421 million in profits last year, and is poised to post record profits this year. A fair settlement with ground crew workers will help, not hurt, the company’s bottom line.”

TWU Local 555 is a local union of the Transport Workers Union of America (TWU). TWU, an affiliate of the AFL-CIO, represents 200,000 workers and retirees, primarily employed in public transportation, rail and aviation. TWU represents Southwest ground crew workers, flight attendants, flight dispatchers and flight crew instructors.