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## **American Airlines Flight Attendants Expect Mediation to Help Efforts to Restore Middle-Class Standards**

### **Negotiations Resume Under Federal Auspices**

**DALLAS** – With a federal mediator joining the Association of Professional Flight Attendants (APFA) and American Airlines (AMR) for contract talks in Dallas, APFA said it is determined to restore the middle-class standards that Flight Attendants once enjoyed.

“With a new Administration and Congress friendly to workers taking their seats in Washington, we expect that airline workers can get a fair shake under federal law,” said APFA President Laura Glading. “American Airlines Flight Attendants have sacrificed for years to help our company succeed, and we’re determined to get back what we lost. In light of management taking multi-million dollar bonuses the last three years, it’s not asking much to restore what we gave up six years ago to keep this airline out of bankruptcy.”

APFA has been in negotiations with the carrier since May. While there has been some progress, the Union decided to file for mediation when it was reported the final contract offer on the table from AMR to the Transport Workers Union had no guaranteed structural pay raises, substantial increases for contributions for retiree health benefits and the elimination of virtually all retirement benefits for new hires.

With this mediation, APFA hopes to turn the tide of employer-friendly decisions of the National Mediation Board over the last eight years. The Union is looking to reestablish, in mediation, middle-class standards of pay and benefits.

“Our Flight Attendants are working harder and longer for less. Like many other Americans, we are struggling to make ends meet, even having to choose between filling a car with gas or buying groceries for our families,” said APFA President Laura Glading. “We care about this airline and our customers and want American to be the leader in the industry. But our members have been transformed into the working poor and we deserve better than that.”

The Union is seeking to recoup pay and benefit cuts it agreed to in 2003 to help American stave off bankruptcy. American Flight Attendants’ pay and benefits have been reduced by 25 percent and their workload has increased by 47 percent (the most of any airline), meaning less time with their families.

“We look forward to mediation and believe this is an opportunity to revive the middle- class standard that Flight Attendants at American had achieved before the company came to us, hat in hand, asking for relief,” Glading continued. “We deserve a contract that substantially increases our pay, vacation and sick leave, so that our standing as part of the middle class is restored.

“We realize the impact of the struggling economy on American Airlines, but many economists are predicting a banner year for airlines in 2009 and oil prices continue to fall,” Glading continued. “We are beginning 2009 with our own Change Agenda, and prepared to take all necessary steps to win a fair agreement.”

*The Association of Professional Flight Attendants (APFA) is the nation’s largest independent Flight Attendant union representing the more than 18,000 American Airlines Flight Attendants. More information is available at: [www.apfa.org](http://www.apfa.org)*