



*Association of Professional Flight Attendants*

---

*Proudly Representing the **Flight Attendants** of American Airlines*

---

Office of the National President

January 18, 2024

Deirdre Hamilton, Chair  
Linda Puchala, Member  
Gerald W. Fauth, III, Member  
National Mediation Board  
1301 K Street, NW, Suite 250E  
Washington, DC 20005-7011

**RE: NMB Case A-14040**

Dear Board Members:

APFA is writing to request the National Mediation Board issue a proffer of arbitration, which would release the parties into a thirty-day cooling-off period in our negotiations with American Airlines. Following our November 20, 2023 letter, the National Mediation Board directed the parties to engage in further mediated sessions in a continued effort to reach an agreement.

APFA and American Airlines met in mediated talks with American Airlines on December 19-21, 2023, and January 9-11, 2024. At these sessions, American Airlines failed to respond to APFA's comprehensive proposal passed almost six months ago. Furthermore, American Airlines has stated they do not intend to offer another economic proposal. Simply put, we are deadlocked on the key issue of economics, and no amount of further bargaining will change that.

We have a limited number of issues left which could easily be resolved in a thirty-day cooling-off period. The parties engaged in targeted bargaining and entered mediation with a limited number of issues. The remaining issues cannot be resolved outside of the economic package. With the employer refusing to counter our economic proposal, negotiations have stalled.

American Airlines has adopted an inflexible bargaining position which is antithetical to collective bargaining. The employer has said that they will not exceed the current industry standard under any circumstances. While APFA has never said industry comparisons do not matter, this status quo model will not work. In any round of bargaining in a defined industry, one employer must take the lead, or the result would be stagnation.

Deirdre Hamilton, Chair  
Linda Puchala, Member  
Gerald W. Fauth, III, Member  
January 18, 2024  
Page 2

Under the clear provisions of the Railway Labor Act, when “efforts to bring about an amicable settlement through mediation shall be unsuccessful,” the Act provides the Board should issue a proffer of arbitration. Here, we are at a deadlock. The employer is wedded to their inflexible framework and APFA has clearly stated that their framework does not and will not work for our Flight Attendants.

American Airlines has no incentive to engage in real bargaining because they believe Flight Attendants will not be released to strike. Flight Attendants have not received a raise since 2019 and many are struggling to get by. With inflation at record levels, affording basic necessities is a challenge for many of our new hires. Our members see auto workers, UPS workers, health care workers, and others improving their lives through collective bargaining backed by the threat of a strike, yet here our employer can simply refuse to counter our economic proposal. That is not how the system of bargaining under the Railway Labor Act is supposed to work.

American Airlines, in their response to our original request, attempts to draw the Board into the substance of our dispute by painting our economic proposal as unreasonable and mischaracterizing the costing of the agreement. While we object to the fact that the employer’s economic proposal does not keep up with inflation, we also believe the federal government should not be involved in the substance of our disputes.

APFA believes our negotiations with American Airlines are at an impasse and respectfully requests a status conference with members of the National Mediation Board where we can more fully explain our position on the matters herein and reiterate our request for a proffer of arbitration in case A-14040.

Sincerely,



Julie Hedrick  
National President  
Association of Professional Flight Attendants

cc: Christopher Beebe, Director, Office of Mediation Services  
Eva Durham, Mediator  
Jack Stephan, Mediator