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## **LEGISLATIVE ALERT!**

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February 14, 2011

Dear Senator:

I urge you to oppose an amendment to the FAA reauthorization (S. 223), offered by Senator Rand Paul (R-KY), that repeals a bipartisan safety and health provision protecting flight attendants from unsafe working conditions.

Senator Paul's amendment would strike Section 509, thereby denying much needed worker safety and health protection for flight attendants. While American workers have enjoyed the benefits and protections afforded by the OSHA these protections do not apply to flight attendants.

In 2000, the FAA and OSHA signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) designed to establish a regulatory regime that would extend some OSHA workplace protections to the aircraft cabin. While the MOU was an important development, it stalled during the last decade and never achieved its objective and to date the FAA has never used its authority to prescribe or enforce even the most basic safety and health standards.

As a result, today flight attendants are not covered by recognized federal standards governing sanitation, air quality, temperature and humidity levels, noise and blood borne pathogens. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data, occupational injury and illness rates among flight attendants are historically several times greater than the rates for all private industry workers.

Unless defeated, Senator Paul's ill advised amendment to strike Section 509 would force flight attendants to continue to work without the benefit of workplace safety protections afforded to most Americans.

The AFL-CIO urges you to reject the Paul Amendment and any other amendment that attempts to weaken Section 509 when it is brought to the floor for a vote. There is no legitimate reason to single out flight attendants as a workforce undeserving of the same basic workplace safety and health protections enjoyed by most employees in this country.

Sincerely,

William Samuel, Director  
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT