AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS

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LEGISLATIVE**ALERT**

June 18, 2014

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the AFL-CIO, I urge you to vote for the Klobuchar-Coats-Schatz-Blunt Amendment to the FY 2015 Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development Appropriations Act. This amendment would protect thousands of domestic aviation jobs by reaffirming that the US Department of Transportation (DOT) must comply with all aspects of the US-EU Air Transport Agreement, or "Open Skies" Agreement. This amendment is necessary because DOT is currently reviewing an application from Norwegian Air International (NAI) which would violate the strong labor standards that were agreed to by the parties to the US-EU Agreement.

Norwegian Air established NAI as a flag-of-convenience carrier registered in Ireland so that it would not have to comply with Norway's strong labor standards. Further, it plans to hire much of its workforce under independent contracts through a recruitment firm based in Singapore, which is not a party to the US-EU Open Skies Agreement. This arrangement will allow NAI to undercut US airlines and their workers by as much as fifty percent. NAI's convoluted new business venture is clearly designed to lower its costs—a business model that is explicitly prohibited by the labor article in the US-EU Agreement. If NAI is granted access to the US aviation market, other companies will be forced to compete on the same basis of low wages and weak regulations.

Approving NAI's air carrier permit application would undermine both fair competition and internationally recognized workers' rights. We urge you to support the Klobuchar-Coats-Schatz-Blunt Amendment to ensure that DOT acts according to US law and international agreements.

Sincerely,

William Samuel, Director
Government Affairs Department