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Machinists Call for Major Changes in Airline Industry

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) General Vice President Robert Roach, Jr. today called for major changes to the airline industry in testimony before the Aviation Subcommittee of the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation on the subject of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization Act of 2009.

“The aviation industry is at a crossroads,” said Roach. “Thirty years of deregulation, reckless management and more than a hundred bankruptcies have left the industry in shambles. America deserves an airline industry that benefits employees, passengers and shareholders, not just executives. Airline workers have shouldered more than their fair share to help revitalize their employers and their industry. This FAA reauthorization bill is a chance to change course.”

Roach urged the Committee to resolve jurisdictional conflicts between the National Mediation Board and the National Labor Relations Board, and to address Flight Attendant issues such as fatigue and their lack of workplace health and safety regulations. Roach also called for enough FAA inspectors to ensure a single high of aircraft safety and maintenance oversight regardless of where in the world the aircraft maintenance is performed.

“As a consequence of putting dollars ahead of sense, maintenance of U.S aircraft has been exported across the globe at a faster pace than the FAA could respond,” said Roach. “Maintenance personnel who work on U.S. aircraft should meet the same eligibility requirements at home and abroad. The IAM believes there should be one level of safety and oversight for the industry regardless of where an aircraft is repaired.”

General Vice President Roach’s complete testimony is available at www.goiam.org/transportation.