

SPEEA-IFPTE Local 2001 comments to NLRB – Aug. 18, 2011

Support Document ID NLRB-2011-0002-0001

On behalf of more than 25,000 professional aerospace employees in the United States, SPEEA-IFPTE Local 2001 submits comments to support and encourage the changes proposed by Document ID NLRB-2011-0002-0001.

Founded in 1946, SPEEA supports employee efforts to exercise their right to collective bargaining. After careful review, it is clear these changes will modernize the NLRB election process and help eliminate existing voting delays. These changes are needed to help discourage undo litigation of frivolous and irrelevant issues by allowing some issues to be decided AFTER an election.

Workers currently struggling to organize with our union would have benefited from the more uniform, transparent, predictable and efficient process these changes will make. Efficiency is something the board must look at when workers take risks to secure their right to collective bargaining.

Firsthand experience

Nearly a year ago, a group of about 100 employees started efforts to organize with SPEEA. An overwhelming number of the employees signed union authorization cards. These workers are still waiting for an election date.

The employer brought in a union-busting law firm from Atlanta, which led to an unusually long (12-day) hearing with the NLRB. On the final day of the hearing, the anti-union lawyer raised a new supervisor issue, which involved approximately 10 percent of the proposed bargaining unit. The fact that the employer was allowed to raise this issue on the last day, after union witnesses had left the city for homes in other parts of the country, put the employees at a distinct disadvantage.

The 12-day hearing produced more than 1,800 pages of transcript and more than 150 exhibits. Employees have navigated through a cumbersome and time-consuming process that would discourage most workers from continuing. The process involved extensions, repeated efforts to clarify decisions and three different SPEEA briefs (each more than 50 pages) filed with the NLRB.

If the proposed changes were in place for these employees, they would have had their representation vote and simply been waiting for a clarifying decision on supervisor-status issues. Instead, nearly a year after the first cards were signed, they must remain diligent against an employer determined to keep them from voting and gaining their right to collective bargaining.

SPEEA-IFPTE Local 2001 supports proposed changes

We encourage the NLRB to institute the proposed changes and help fix the broken, bureaucratic maze that unfairly blocks workers who seek to exercise their right to bargain collectively.

Respectfully,

SPEEA member elected Executive Board

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