

Spirit contract offer overwhelmingly rejected by 96.5% of SPEEA members



WICHITA, KS – Faced with a contract offer that sought large concessions from employees, stagnated wages for a decade and ignored proven methods for harnessing medical costs, technical and professional workers at Spirit AeroSystems today told management they must do better by voting 96.5% to reject the offer.

Voting at an all-member meeting this afternoon (July 28) at Century II, aerospace employees in the Wichita Technical and Professional Unit (WTPU) of the Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace (SPEEA), IFPTE Local 2001, voted **684 to reject** and **25 to accept** the offer by Spirit management. It was the largest defeat of a contract offer in SPEEA history at Spirit.

“This overwhelming rejection should convince Spirit that more work needs to be done in improving their offer,” said Bill Hartig, chair of the WTPU negotiation team.

The union’s negotiation team and governing council each recommended members reject Spirit’s offer for a new 9.5-year contract. Employees have been working under a contract extension since July 11. That extension officially expired Monday (July 25).

Negotiations for a new contract for the 2,300 union represented employees started in May. Talks ended July 19 when Spirit abruptly delivered its offer and left negotiations. Despite union proposals that would have saved Spirit money and provided incentives to employees, the company’s offer called for doubling medical premiums, expanding Spirit’s ability to keep temporary contract workers instead of recalling employees from layoff and would have locked wages at below-market levels for the duration of the agreement.

With today’s overwhelming rejection and union membership increasing, SPEEA expects negotiations to resume and is hopeful Spirit will be ready to negotiate. Today’s vote did not include a vote on strike authorization.

"The SPEEA negotiations team worked hard to craft a proposal that would meet Spirit's stated desires for a long-term contract with market-based compensation and protections for our team going forward," said Hartig. "We are ready to get back to the negotiations table and come to the fair and equitable resolution that our members deserve and the company desires."

A local of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), SPEEA represents 24,600 aerospace professionals at Boeing, Spirit AeroSystems in Wichita, Triumph Composite Systems, Inc., in Spokane, Wash., and BAE Systems, Inc., in Irving, Texas.

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Contacts: Bob Brewer, Midwest Director, 316-682-0262 or 316-644-9967
Bill Dugovich, Communications Director, 206-674-7368 or 206-683-9857
Ray Goforth, Executive Director, 206-433-0991