

SPEEA petitions for worker Trade Act assistance as Spirit announces more layoffs in Wichita



WICHITA, Kan. – Continuing efforts to help represented employees at Spirit AeroSystems, the union representing professional workers today (Thursday, Aug. 29) filed a petition with the U.S. Department of Labor seeking access to training, income support and other benefits through the federal Trade Act.

The filing by the Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace (SPEEA), IFPTE Local 2001, was made just hours before Spirit announced a new round of layoffs, a move that will further cut the ranks of experienced employees needed to meet demands by The Boeing Company and other customers for increased output.

Recently secured by SPEEA for employees laid-off by Boeing in Washington state, Trade Act funding is designed to assist eligible laid-off workers impacted by increased imports or companies moving work to other countries. If approved, laid off employees can apply for additional assistance, including long-term training tuition assistance, income support, health care tax credit, as well as job search and relocation allowances.

The Trade Act filing is part of SPEEA's on-going effort to help employees who are shouldering the burden of major missteps by Spirit management. Since spring, Spirit has taken more than \$940 million in accounting charges.

Today's announcement by Spirit was a request for employees willing to "volunteer" for layoff. However, the union understands layoffs beyond the volunteers are planned. With 360 employees dismissed in July, Spirit is nearing 500 layoffs in a quarter which would require issuing 60-day layoff notices under the federal Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act. Last month's layoffs in Kansas and Oklahoma were immediate.

SPEEA has held and sponsored a number of employment assistance and retirement seminars for represented employees. It also filed, and is working, 221 grievances that question the company's ability to disregard its own policies and employee contracts and dismiss employees on the spot. Two Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) charges related to Spirit's layoff actions were also filed by SPEEA and are now before the National Labor Relations Board.

A local of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), SPEEA represents 26,400 aerospace professionals at Spirit and Boeing in Kansas, Washington, Oregon and California; and at Triumph Composite Systems, Inc., in Spokane, Washington.

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