

SPEEA secures Trade Act assistance for employees laid-off at Spirit AeroSystems



WICHITA, Kan. – Hundreds of laid-off employees at Spirit AeroSystems now have access to training, income support and other benefits through the federal Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program after U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) this week approved a petition filed by the union representing engineers and professionals.

The Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace (SPEEA), IFPTE Local 2001, received official notice Wednesday (Oct. 23) that employees laid off by Spirit could seek assistance provided by TAA under the Trade Act. The program is designed to assist eligible laid-off workers impacted by increased imports or companies moving work to other countries. This week's approval means laid off Spirit employees can apply for additional help, including long-term training tuition assistance, income support, health care tax credit, as well as job search and relocation allowances.

“This is excellent news for our laid-off workers in Wichita,” said SPEEA Midwest Director Bob Brewer. “It doesn't eliminate the hardships of being laid off, but it will help people find new employment.”

Employees eligible for TAA will receive a letter from the Kansas Department of Labor that outlines the application process and deadlines for benefits.

Filing for TAA is part of SPEEA's on-going effort to help employees who are shouldering the burden of Spirit's corporate missteps and problems.

In recent months, Spirit has laid-off more than 500 employees, including 319 engineers and professionals represented by SPEEA at the company's Wichita plant. There are indications that more employees could be laid off in the months ahead.

SPEEA petitioned for and secured TAA during previous layoff cycles for employees at Spirit. Earlier this year the union was part of an effort that secured TAA for engineers, technical workers and pilots laid off by The Boeing Company in Washington state.

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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Contact: Bob Brewer, Midwest director, (316) 682-0262

Bill Dugovich, SPEEA communications director, (206) 683-9857