

SPEEA files new Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) charges against Boeing for surveillance of members



EVERETT, WA – The Boeing Company was charged Wednesday (Jan. 2) with Unfair Labor Practices (ULP) after company personnel photographed members of the Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace (SPEEA), IFPTE Local 2001, marching at its Everett factory to support efforts to negotiate new labor contracts.

The specific charges relates to Boeing taking surveillance photographs of engineers and technical employees marching inside and outside the factory on Dec. 12 and after. Employer surveillance of union activities has consistently been ruled illegal because it has a tendency to intimidate employees into not exercising their rights to engage in union activities.

SPEEA and Boeing are scheduled to resume negotiations Jan. 9. Federal mediators called for a break in talks before the holidays. The two sides started meeting in April to negotiate new contracts for 23,000 engineers and technical workers. In October, engineers rejected Boeing's initial offer by 95.5 percent. Technical workers rejected the company's offer by 97 percent. Existing contracts expired Nov. 25.

The National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) protects employees' rights to engage in concerted (union) activity and prohibits employers from interfering in these activities.

"This is well settled law that such surveillance is illegal," said Ray Goforth, SPEEA executive director. "It's disappointing to see Boeing leadership resort to intimidation rather than persuasion."

Since September, SPEEA members have held weekly solidarity marches, meetings and other events at Boeing facilities around Puget Sound, in Portland and Utah. Participation ranges from a few dozen members to more than 2,500 marching in Everett. All of the marches have been peaceful. SPEEA members are calling Wednesday (Jan. 9) a "Day of Action," with a variety of events planned to mark the resumption of negotiations.

Filed at the Seattle office of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), this additional charge reads: *"Since on or about December 12, 2012, the Employer has photographed employees engaged in peaceful, protected concerted activity at its Everett facility."*

A previous charge by SPEEA filed in October and now waiting action by the NLRB, relates to Boeing seizing employee cameras and photographs of the protected union marches, along with videotaping the events.

A local of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), SPEEA represents 26,560 aerospace professionals at Boeing, Spirit AeroSystems in Wichita, Kansas, and Triumph Composite Systems, Inc. in Spokane, Wash.

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