COVID-19 relief package includes worker protections

Passage of the third COVID-19 relief package brings help for airlines and the aviation sector and provides important protections for impacted aerospace workers. SPEEA worked closely with the IFPTE and allies in Congress to ensure our priorities of protecting jobs, collective bargaining agreements, and the safety of union members was included in the bill that passed. Although we could not secure everything we wanted in the final version of the bill, SPEEA’s advocacy helped significantly improve the final bill to better protect workers and families.

As SPEEA continues to advocate for members through the COVID-19 pandemic, we maintain taxpayer-funded financial support flowing to large corporations should be used exclusively to maintain jobs, salary and benefits for their workforces. Here are some of the features SPEEA was able to help secure in the final COVID-19 stimulus bill, H.R. 748:

- $17 billion in loans available for businesses critical to maintaining national security (written for Boeing)
- Restrictions on the use of a $17 billion federal loan for one year past the life of the loan. Restrictions include:
  - Protections for collective bargaining agreements.
  - Requires recipients to maintain March 24, 2020 employment levels, to the extent practical.
  - Restricts recipients from reducing current employment levels until Sept. 30, 2020, thereafter, recipients cannot reduce current employment levels by more than 10%.
  - No stock buybacks or dividends.
- Restrictions on any increases to executive compensation.
- $1,200 payment to most individual adults/couples $2,400, and an additional $500 per child (with $99k/$150k income restrictions).
- Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits are immediately available.
- $600 increase to UI payments.
- Federal incentives for states to eliminate UI waiting periods.
- Federal student loan interest rates set to 0% for a period of six months and payments deferred for the six-month period.
- Incentivizes employer-provided student loan repayments on behalf of employees.
- Requires real-time public reporting of Treasury transactions under the Act, including terms of loans, investments or other assistance to corporations.
- Creation of Treasury Department Special Inspector General for Pandemic Recovery to provide oversight of Treasury loans and investments and a Pandemic Response Accountability Committee to protect taxpayer dollars.

See additional federal and state coronavirus-related resources available at www.speea.org.

Technical BUC meets, members to revote contract offer

In a first for SPEEA, the Technical Bargaining Unit Council (BUC) held a virtual meeting April 2 and authorized a second vote of The Boeing Company’s contract offer. The meeting was a necessary step to holding a revote after complaints surfaced regarding incomplete information in the original voting package.

The Council did not issue a recommendation on how members should vote.

With requirements for social distancing eliminating a normal face-to-face meeting, Northwest Council Chair Jeff Forbes chaired the meeting from his home using password-protected conferencing. Council Reps, union officers and staff experts attended from their own homes using personal computers.

The contract offer remains unchanged. Key items include a new method for setting salary pools and extending the protections of a contract from 2022 to 2026.

Ballot packages are scheduled to mail to members on Thursday, April 9. Votes are due in the SPEEA P.O. Box by 5 p.m., Monday, April 27.

The revote process:
- Technical Bargaining Unit Council meets and authorizes vote.
- Ballot packages are sent to union printing house for preparing and mailing.
- Ballots packages mailed to Technical Bargaining Unit members on Thursday, April 9.
  - Members who are unable to receive a ballot by mail can request an email ballot. Send requests to: terryh@speea.org.
- Ballot must be in the SPEEA voting P.O. Box by 5 p.m., Monday, April 27.
- Tellers begin counting ballots on Monday, April 27. Under existing

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Social distancing and group-gathering restrictions, the validation and counting process by the Tellers will likely take more than one and possibly several days.

- Results of revote announced.

The need for a new vote

In the initial ballot package, a summary of the offer was included that did not reflect the 2% Individual Guaranteed Salary Increase for 2020. Following a member complaint, the Tellers ruled it reasonable for an individual to rely on the information sent with the ballots – which understated the minimum raise for 2020 – and that could have had a material impact on how members voted. As a result, the Technical Bargaining Unit is revoting the 2020-2026 contract offer. The offer is the same with nothing changed. The summary sheet going in the revote ballot package is corrected.

Concern and appreciation

We thank the members expressing concern about the contract votes and officer elections. It shows SPEEA members pay attention to details and value following established processes. It is this detailed approach and need to “get it right” that is now resulting in re-voting the Technical Unit Contract.

Prof and Tech Units

Retention-rating appeal guide and request form online

Managers at The Boeing Company recently distributed retention-rating notices to Profs and Techs. The retention notices determine the general order of layoffs if needed in the coming year. The SPEEA Prof and Tech contracts include an appeal process (Article 8.4) for certain situations.

To request a retention-rating appeal, learn what’s required in the guide/request form at www.speea.org (drop-down menu: Member Tools/Retention).

Appeal request deadline

Those who want to appeal have up to 30 days after receiving the retention rating notice to file a completed appeal request form. Remember to review the retention information online before making a request to appeal.

COVID-19

SPEEA support continues

Following health care professionals and government recommendations regarding the coronavirus pandemic, SPEEA offices in Seattle (Tukwila), Everett, Wichita and Seal Beach remain closed.

While offices are closed, SPEEA contract administrators and union staff continue to work remotely to meet the needs of represented employees.

If you have questions or concerns about workplace issues or your personal situation, contact SPEEA. You may email your staff contacts through regular channels or send a note to speea@speea.org.

Committee members can check the regional online calendars at www.speea.org for virtual meeting details. Continue to watch your email and the website for important updates.

Get email while working from home signup at www.speea.org

Sign up for home email