



P R E S S R E L E A S E

SOUTHWEST AIRLINES PILOTS' ASSOCIATION

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Southwest Airlines Pilots Hold First Ever Picket to Demonstrate Frustration Over Lengthy Negotiations

(DALLAS) – Hundreds of uniformed pilots from the Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association (SWAPA) lined up at Southwest Airlines headquarters and near the entrance to Love Field Airport today in protest of the lack of progress made toward a new contract after nearly four years of negotiations.

“For the first time in the history of Southwest Airlines, our Union has made the decision to informational picket in order to express our displeasure in the fact that after four years of negotiations during record profits, we still do not have an acceptable contract,” said SWAPA President, Captain Jon Weaks.

“Historically, Southwest Airlines has taken care of employees first, which lead to happy customers and shareholders. Now the equation is unbalanced, and employees are the lowest priority.”

The pilot contract became amendable September 1, 2012 and negotiations began six months prior to that. Eighty-five percent of domestic travel is completed by four major domestic carriers, including Southwest Airlines. Of that domestic travel, 25 percent is flown by a Southwest Airlines pilot. The pilots believe they should have a contract that is commensurate with their peers given the domestic landscape and current economic climate of the airline.

“A competitive contract has a longer-term effect than just our current group of pilots,” continued Captain Weaks. “Southwest’s culture has been key in recruiting the best qualified pilots. We want to ensure that SWA is positioned to continue to attract the best and brightest aviators through career opportunity and competitive pay and work rules.”

SWAPA and Southwest Airlines are currently in federal mediation, which allows a government-assigned mediator to assist in talks. While the two sides have yet to meet formally in 2016, SWAPA hopes to return to the table as soon as possible in order to finalize a new contract.

Weaks continued, “The pilots want to return to being valued partners in the overarching goal of making Southwest Airlines the most profitable airline and the most sought-after employer in the industry.”

Located in Dallas, Texas, the Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association (SWAPA) is a non-profit employee organization representing the more than 8,300 pilots of Southwest Airlines. SWAPA works to provide a secure and rewarding career for Southwest pilots and their families through negotiating contracts, defending contractual rights and actively promoting professionalism and safety. For more information on the Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association, visit

www.swapa.org.

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