



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

SOUTHWEST AIRLINES PILOTS' ASSOCIATION

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Southwest Airlines Pilots File Suit Against Southwest for Pursuing Non-Contractual Aircraft

(DALLAS) – SWAPA, the union representing the pilots of Southwest Airlines today filed papers in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas to obtain *status quo* protection due to unlawful tactics of Southwest Airlines. The carrier is ramping up negotiations pressure by threatening to force its pilots to fly aircraft not listed in the collective bargaining agreement.

Southwest Airlines is the launch customer of Boeing's new 737 MAX aircraft ("the MAX") with scheduled deliveries beginning the first half of 2017. The pilots assert that Southwest may not operate or threaten to operate the MAX without a contract provision for this aircraft. SWAPA asserts that Southwest Airlines is violating federal law by threatening to proceed unilaterally if an agreement is not reached before the MAX is delivered for use by the carrier.

"Each new type of 737 that has joined the Southwest fleet over the years has required contractual agreement, whether in Section 6 negotiations or through an amendment to a current contract," said SWAPA President, Captain Jon Weaks. "We believe Southwest Airlines, in planning to fly the MAX without a contract for it, is threatening a breach of status quo under Section 6 of the Railway Labor Act. Pilots cannot be forced into labor without a contract in place."

Southwest has a firm order for 200 MAX aircraft between 2017-2027 with options on an additional 191 over that same time frame.

"Over the past 10 years there have been multiple instances where our contract was reopened to accommodate the use of a new aircraft, whether it was the 737-700, 737-800, or the B717," continued Captain Weaks. "The MAX is certainly no different and we expect management to finalize a contract with its pilots expeditiously so that this new aircraft can be flown."

The pilots have been negotiating with Southwest on a new contract since 2012. Currently in federal mediation, hundreds of pilots will descend upon Chicago on May 18 to engage in informational picketing both on Michigan Avenue and near Chicago Midway airport.

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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