



# P R E S S   R E L E A S E

**SOUTHWEST AIRLINES PILOTS' ASSOCIATION**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Southwest Airlines Pilots Picket SWA Shareholders Meeting after Four Years without a Contract**

(CHICAGO) – During this morning’s Southwest Airlines Annual Shareholders Meeting at the Renaissance Blackstone Hotel, an unprecedented number of uniformed pilots lined up on Michigan Avenue in silent protest regarding the lack of progress made toward a new contract after nearly four years of negotiations. As one of four airlines that fly 85 percent of the domestic traffic, SWAPA is asking for a contract that is in line with the pay and benefits of the other three major U.S. carriers. A second picket is scheduled for this afternoon on Cicero Avenue near Midway International Airport.

“When 10 percent of your pilot workforce travels in to protest against their employer’s actions it is a pretty clear sign there is a problem to address,” said Captain Weaks. “Southwest was given our negotiating platform which both rewards the pilots for our efforts over this incredibly profitable time but ensures Southwest is financially agile and competitive for the future. It’s a win-win proposal.”

Over the previous four years, Southwest shareholders have been rewarded with \$3.1 billion in stock buybacks while the pilot group has not had a raise since 2011. SWAPA and Southwest Airlines are currently in federal mediation, which allows a government-assigned mediator to assist in talks.

“Historically, Southwest Airlines has taken care of employees first, which lead to happy customers and shareholders. The order is now flipped, with employees continually the lowest priority, or perhaps not even a priority at all,” continued Weaks. “Without a competitive contract, Southwest will no longer be able to attract the best and brightest aviators.”

The SWAPA pilots were also joined at these picket events today by Southwest flight attendants, Southwest maintenance workers, and pilots from other airlines.

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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](http://www.swapa.org).

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