
HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 4032

State of Washington 59th Legislature 2006 Regular Session

By Representatives Upthegrove, Schual-Berke, Hasegawa, Chase,
Hudgins, Simpson and Conway

Read first time 01/13/2006. Referred to Committee on Commerce & Labor.

1 TO THE HONORABLE GEORGE W. BUSH, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
2 AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF
3 REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
4 UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED:

5 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
6 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled, respectfully
7 represent and petition as follows:

8 WHEREAS, The airline industry has recently faced a high number of
9 bankruptcies and financial challenges, including the bankruptcies of
10 United Airlines, Northwest Airlines, and Delta Airlines; and

11 WHEREAS, Airlines in bankruptcy have terminated pensions, defaulted
12 on pension obligations to airline employees, and underfunded pension
13 systems; and

14 WHEREAS, Existing federal law allows financially weak airlines to
15 avoid contributions to pension plans and to increase plan liabilities
16 that are at least partially insured by the federal Pension Benefit
17 Guaranty Corporation; and

18 WHEREAS, When the federal Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation
19 takes over retirement plans, federal regulations limit the amount of

1 pension payments that can be made, reducing the expected pension
2 payments of some retirees; and

3 WHEREAS, Airline employees and retirees need assurance that they
4 will receive the retirement benefits they have depended on receiving;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, Several thousand airline pilots and employees live in
7 Washington state; and

8 WHEREAS, Northwest Airlines alone currently has nearly 4,000
9 pension plan participants in Washington state; and

10 WHEREAS, Bankrupt airline retirees and employees in Washington
11 state would be devastated by massive cuts in pension benefits; and

12 WHEREAS, Without congressional action, more than 300,000 employees
13 and retirees from a variety of airlines nationwide could see their
14 pension benefits reduced or eliminated altogether; and

15 WHEREAS, Action at the federal level can help to reduce damage to
16 airline employees who depend on their pensions by providing airlines
17 with flexibility in handling pensions during bankruptcy;

18 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that the United
19 States Congress declare its support for and enact federal legislation
20 directed at creating airline pension reform and protecting retirement
21 benefits for all employees in the airline industry.

22 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
23 transmitted to the Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United
24 States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the
25 House of Representatives, and each member of Congress from the State of
26 Washington.

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