

Press Release: Illinois Sick Leave Act of 2017 Extended to Aviation Workers

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Illinois Sick Leave Act of 2017 Extended to Aviation Workers

30,000+ aviation workers in Illinois will soon have the right to use employer-provided sick leave to care for ill or injured relatives

After a multi-year fight led by members of the Transport Workers Union (TWU), the Illinois state legislature has passed the *Illinois Sick Leave Act for Aviation Workers*. This bill extends the rights included in the *Illinois Sick Leave Act of 2017* to cover workers in the airline industry, including flight attendants, pilots, ramp workers, airline mechanics, and other airline workers who were previously excluded from the 2017 bill.

The *Illinois Sick Leave Act for Aviation Workers* ensures that more than 30,000 aviation workers in Illinois will have the right to use employer-provided sick leave to care for an ill or injured child, spouse, sibling, parent, or grandparent – correcting the error of the 2017 bill and restoring fairness and equity to airline workers and their families.

At the forefront of this fight were TWU Local 556 2nd Vice President Corliss King, TWU Local 556 Shop Steward Roy Soria, and Local 556 member Suzie Lyons. After learning that they were initially excluded from the *Illinois Sick Leave Act of 2017*, TWU members mobilized to ensure these sick leave protections were extended to workers in the aviation industry.

“Extending flexibility in the workplace to workers in the airline industry – flexibility that was initially provided to other workers in Illinois – is an issue of fairness and equity for us,” said TWU Local 556 2nd Vice President Corliss King. Exclusion from the *Illinois Sick Leave Act of 2017* was of particular importance for King, who was unable to use earned sick leave provided by her employer to care for her ill husband in 2018. “This issue is close to my heart”, said Ms. King, a Chicago Midway-based Flight Attendant. “I’ve earned sick leave through my union contract, I should have been able to use it when I needed it if it hadn’t been for the airline worker exclusion.”

The *Illinois Sick Leave Act*’s extension to aviation workers in Illinois is part of a comprehensive transportation bill that will head to Governor Pritzker, who is expected to sign. The TWU would like to thank Illinois State Speaker of the House Chris Welch, Illinois State Representative Joyce Mason, Illinois State Representative Jaime Andrade, Illinois State Senate President Don Harmon, Illinois State Senator Mike Hastings, and Illinois State Senator Ram Villivalam for their leadership and support of TWU members, their families, and all aviation workers. Additionally, the TWU thanks its allies in labor, Illinois AFL-CIO President Tim Drea, AFA, APFA, and ALPA for working tirelessly to see the passage of this bill.

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The Transport Workers Union of America represents more than 150,000 members across the airline, railroad, transit, universities, utilities and service sectors