

# AMFA Fights to Keep American Jobs and Skies Safe

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Louie Key, Steven Nowak,

and James Kinnerk

Contact: Louie Key

(720) 744-6628

Louie.Key@amfanatl.org Aurora, CO October 12, 2010 -- The number of licensed aircraft mechanic jobs lost to outsourcing facilities and foreign repair stations where work is done by less qualified, less skilled labor continues to rise. The Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA) is working with lawmakers on Capitol Hill to save jobs and increase the safety of aircraft for the flying public.

"Safe skies and American jobs are not partisan questions," said Louie Key, AMFA National Director. "We need solutions. The interests of aircraft mechanics and air passengers have been ignored for too long and AMFA isn't going to stand by and let it keep happening." Key notes domestic airlines now send more than 70 percent of aircraft maintenance to outside facilities. Foreign repair shops often hire less experienced, poorly trained mechanics who, in some cases, cannot even read the safety and repair manuals written in English. In these facilities, one licensed worker usually supervises 20 or more unlicensed ones. The FAA is prevented from adequately inspecting these offshore stations due to a lack of inspectors, inadequate funding, and inadequate regulations. AMFA is pressuring Congress to pass the latest FAA Reauthorization Bill with provisions to hold foreign repair shops to the same safety and qualification standards as those in the U.S. "The bottom line is the airlines ship jobs to repair stations because labor is cheaper," said Key. "It's cheaper because foreign shops are cutting corners with employees. That's putting people at risk and keeping those jobs overseas." AMFA hired LobbyIt.com, a powerful Capitol Hill lobbying firm, to help in its legislative endeavors. Through LobbyIt.com's efforts, AMFA has met with dozens of members of Congress and key committee staff to help bring attention to these issues. "Members are starting to take notice. The FAA Reauthorization Bill is a solid first step," said Paul Kanitra, LobbyIt.com president. "Ultimately, Congress still needs to do more, but AMFA is very happy with the progress we've made so far." The FAA Reauthorization Bill is one of many spending bills languishing in Congress. AMFA is non-partisan and is calling on both parties to come together to protect America's air passengers. "We can't afford to allow poorly trained, untested workers to certify the planes which carry our friends and family," said Key. "Especially when there are experienced, trained mechanics right here at home ready to do the work. Congress needs to act now." The Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association is a craft oriented, independent aviation union. It is not an industrial union and represents only airline technicians and related employees in the craft or class in accordance with the National Mediation Board Rules and their dictates. AMFA is committed to elevating the professional standing of technicians and to achieving progressive improvements in the wages, benefits, and working conditions of the skilled craftsmen and women it represents. ###