



**LEGISLATIVE  
UPDATE**



## **Government Shutdown Avoided; Next Deadline Nov. 21**

Congress passed, and the President signed, a Continuing Resolution (CR) to keep the government open through Nov. 21. As a reminder, before leaving for August recess, a bipartisan budget deal (H.R. 3877) was enacted that raises spending caps on discretionary spending by \$321 billion over two years and effectively ends the across-the-board spending cuts known as sequestration. This allowed Congress to move forward with the annual appropriations bills to fund federal agencies for fiscal year (FY) 2020 before the Sept. 30 deadline. However, due to the condensed timeframe, Congress was unable to complete its work on the 12 annual appropriations bills. The short-term CR provides additional time for the House and Senate to negotiate on a larger spending package this fall. It does, however, set up another potential spending fight during the week before Thanksgiving.

Throughout the month of September, the Senate Appropriations Committee worked quickly to pass 10 of its 12 FY 2020 appropriations bills. Unfortunately, none of the bills were considered on the Senate floor before the Sept. 30 funding deadline. Meanwhile, the House of Representatives already passed 10 of its 12 appropriations bills before the August recess. With a CR (that simply continues current funding levels) in place until Nov. 21, the two chambers will work toward an agreement on their appropriations bills in order to avoid a government shutdown. Ultimately, another government funding bill will need to be passed by Congress and be signed into law by the President in order to avoid another government shutdown.

## **Federal Employee Pay Raise**

There currently are different proposals regarding pay raises for 2020 for federal employees coming from the House, Senate, and Administration. Each year, the president is required to submit an alternative pay plan to Congress by the end of August, otherwise, significant automatic pay increases will take effect under the Federal Employee Pay Comparability Act. On Aug. 30, President Trump issued an alternative pay plan for 2020 in which he endorsed a 2.6% across the board pay increase for civilian federal employees, but no increase to locality pay, effectively ending the administration's push for a pay freeze next year. Congress has the ability to propose pay raises for federal employees. For FY 2020, the House-passed Financial Services and General Government (FSGG) appropriations bill includes a proposed 2.6% raise across the board, plus a 0.5%

increase in locality pay, so with the House proposal, most could see a total increase of 3.1%. However, the Senate FSGG bill does not contain any pay raise proposal for federal employees.

Because a CR was signed into law to extend current funding for the government at FY 2019 levels, the federal employee pay raise proposals are on hold until the House and Senate agree to a final FSGG appropriations bill, and it is signed into law by the President. Alternatively, the President could decide to implement his proposed 2.6% increase in 2020. The pay raise will continue to be debated within the next few months, and NATCA GA staff will continue to provide updates.

## The End of Sequestration

As mentioned above, sequestration (mandatory, across-the-board spending cuts) is officially dead as part of the enacted budget deal that raised spending caps through FY 2021, the final year of sequestration. Without Congressional action before Sept. 30, sequestration would have returned for FY 2020, forcing spending cuts to both defense and domestic programs.

Sequestration was originally enacted when spending levels were set in the Budget Control Act (Public Law 112-25) to cut federal dollars and reduce the federal deficit. In recent years, Congress has raised the spending caps to avoid the cuts. Since sequestration was established, NATCA has been a leading voice in opposing these damaging cuts that negatively impact the NAS and NATCA members. Notably, in 2013, sequestration led to furloughs of air traffic controllers and other aviation safety professionals, which led to massive flight delays. NATCA led the wide-ranging legislative campaign for enactment of [H.R. 1765](#), the Reducing Flight Delays Act, which put those furloughs to an end after just one week. This critical legislation gave the FAA the ability to transfer \$253 million in funding from the Airport Improvement Program account to the FAA's Operations account in order to end the FAA furloughs and allow aviation safety professionals to return to work full time. This legislative campaign was recognized as one of the top lobbying victories for the 113th Congress.

Following NATCA's legislative victory in 2013 to end the FAA furloughs, NATCA remained steadfast in its opposition to sequestration and continued its full fledged advocacy efforts. Pointing to the 2013 furloughs and flight delays, NATCA consistently reminded Congress and the Trump Administration of the negative effects that sequestration has had on the NAS and NATCA members. NATCA's collective voice encouraged Congress to blunt the effect of sequestration, as Congress has voted to minimize the impact of sequestration every year since 2013 and ultimately voted to kill sequestration when the recent budget deal was signed into law. NATCA is proud to have played a key role in the death of sequestration.

## NATCA Remembers Congressman Elijah Cummings

The National Air Traffic  
Controllers Association  
(NATCA) joins the  
nation and constituents of



“

Congressman Cummings represented the very best ideals of integrity and public service and he fully championed federal employees, including members of NATCA.



He leaves a large void in our hearts and in Congress, but his memory and his legacy of giving a voice to so many will be everlasting.”

**PAUL RINALDI**  
NATCA PRESIDENT



Maryland’s 7th congressional district in mourning the passing of Congressman Elijah Cummings, who in addition to his passionate pursuit of civil rights and well-earned reputation for kindness and compassion, was also a great supporter of the federal workforce and all who made public service at all levels their calling.

“Congressman Cummings represented the very best ideals of integrity and public service and he fully championed federal employees, including members of NATCA,

who require the support of lawmakers in order to better provide service to the public,” said NATCA President Paul Rinaldi.

Most recently, in support of NATCA members, Congressman Cummings was one of the first House members to co-sponsor H.R. 1108, the Aviation Funding Stability Act of 2019, which would keep the Federal Aviation Administration fully funded in the event of another government shutdown. But his support for NATCA and its members was evident throughout his service in Congress. For example, in 2002, Congressman Cummings reintroduced federal employee benefits equity legislation that sought to fill a gap in retirement benefits that directly affected many NATCA members nearing the end of their federal service careers as air traffic controllers.

He was always a vocal opponent of amendments that would reduce or eliminate union representational “official time,” which NATCA representatives use to work with FAA to resolve problems and implement programs critical to the National Airspace System. Rep. Cummings co-sponsored the Reducing Flight Delays Act to get NATCA members back to work when they were furloughed due to the sequestration-related budget cuts in 2013, and he was one of the leading voices on ending the most recent 35-day government shutdown.

Rinaldi said, “We extend our deepest sympathies to his family and his constituents. As many have said, he leaves a large void in our hearts and in Congress, but his memory and his legacy of giving a voice to so many will be everlasting.”

(Pictured with Congressman Cummings are NATCA members April Ellis of Teterboro ATCT (TEB), and FacRep Aubrey Farrar of Washington-National ATCT (DCA).)

## NLC Welcomes Newest Member: Jenny Chhetri

Atlanta ATCT (ATL)  
member Jenny Chhetri  
recently joined the NATCA



Legislative Committee (NLC) as Southern Region Representative.

“Jenny has most recently served as the Georgia state coordinator and has done outstanding work in that role,” said NLC Chair Steve Weidner. “Jenny is a great addition to the NLC, and we look forward to working with her!”

Chhetri’s air traffic control career began in the U.S. Navy in 1998. She separated from the Navy in 2006, attended the University of West Florida with a major in biology, and then was hired by the FAA in 2008. Chhetri joined the NATCA family at O’Hare ATCT (ORD) and transferred in 2013 to ATL, where she has served as secretary on the ATL e-board.

“While in Atlanta, I began working with our NSO legislative team to educate our members and Georgia’s congressional delegation, and promoted overall member activism,” Chhetri said. “I look forward to serving on the NLC, and I’m honored to sit beside such a knowledgeable and experienced Alternate NLC member, Anthony Schifano (Charlotte ATCT, CLT), who has been an amazing NATCA brother to me over the years.”



## NLC and NSC Organize a Joint Meeting



NATCA's National Legislative Committee (NLC) and National Safety Committee

(NSC) held a joint one-day meeting in Tennessee. NSC Chairman Steve Hansen and NLC Chair Steve Weidner have been trying to arrange a joint meeting between the two committees for years and were finally able to make it happen. Their shared goal was to get their respective committee members to become more familiar with what the other committee does and discuss how the two groups can work together.

“We can better serve our members and make the NAS safer and more efficient when we all have a better understanding of how we can work together,” said Weidner. “This meeting gave us all a much better idea of how safety work influences legislative work and vice-versa.”

After the joint meeting, the committees met individually. The NLC discussed the 2020 elections, current legislative initiatives such as H.R. 1108 and S. 762, and NATCA in Washington (NiW) 2020.

## **Boots on the Ground and RNAV: Working For Your Future**

NATCA's Boots on the Ground members and Retired NATCA Active Volunteers (RNAV) are busy at work. The Boots on the Ground program allows mostly retired NATCA members to participate in the labor-to-labor outreach and education program of the AFL-CIO (American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations). NATCA “Boots” members and other union members reach out to fellow labor members to educate them about candidates in upcoming elections. This program is extremely effective at getting the word out to the labor community regarding candidates’ records and positions. The RNAV program allows for retired members of NATCA to stay active in the Union.

### **Labor Activist Boot Camp**





In preparation for the Labor 2019 effort in Virginia, NATCA Boots On The Ground member Craig Smith and RNAV Chair Tom Thompson attended the Labor 2019 Activist Bootcamp held at the IBEW union hall in Richmond, Va., on Aug. 19.

More than 40 members from all parts of the state, representing a wide cross section of unions, were in attendance. The bootcamp included training on organizing and movement building, common sense economics, leadership and team building, as well as breakout sessions on volunteer recruitment, the Labor Action Network, and minivan and worksite mobilization.

---

## Retiree Phone Banking



Continuing our support of Virginia's Labor 2019 program, NATCA retiree and Boots On The Ground member Bob Zabel helps coordinate a weekly retiree phone bank. This phone bank provides an opportunity for retired union volunteers to phone other union retirees in Virginia, and share information on this year's union-endorsed candidates. Zabel was joined recently by union members from the National Association of Letter Carriers, United Automobile Workers, International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, and Office and Professional Employees International Union.

---

## NoVa Labor Walks





On Sept. 28, RNAV members joined NoVA Labor and 68 total volunteers, going door-to-door and volunteering at a phone bank in preparation for election day on Nov. 5.

NATCA Boots on the Ground members Bob Zabel and Tom Thompson, along with RNAV member/volunteer Matt Sullivan, helped facilitate the day's activities with zone coordinator duties to help ensure a successful experience for all those who participated in the event. Special guest speaker Sara Nelson, International President of the Association of Flight Attendants CWA (AFA), gave the group an inspirational sendoff speech.

NATCA volunteers joined members from the United Brotherhood of Carpenters, the Amalgamated Transit Union, Communication Workers of America, United Association, American Federation of Government Employees, United Auto Workers, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, American Federation of Teachers, International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, Office and Professional Employees International Union, United Steel Workers, National Association of Letter Carriers, and AFA.





NATCA Boots On The Ground members Bob Zabel and Tom Thompson helped coordinate another walk on Oct. 5, hosted by the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America (UBC). Virginia Congresswoman and AFSCME (American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees) member Elizabeth Guzman and AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer Elissa McBride also joined the NoVA Labor Walk.

"Record numbers of Virginia union members are canvassing and phone banking," said Boots on the Ground Program Manager Thompson. "It's the first time we have a real opportunity to achieve a pro-worker majority in the Virginia General Assembly."

Thompson reported that a first-time NoVA walk attendee and union member said after seeing the event's activities and information, "You guys got it going on here! I've never seen that before. This is a hell of a thing."

---

To learn more about the Boots on the Ground program and to get active in your state, please [click here](#). To join the Retired NATCA Active Volunteers (RNAV), please [click here](#). For questions, please contact Boots on the Ground Program Manager and RNAV Committee Chair [Tom Thompson](#).

## Hatch Act Tip of the Month

### **Can I have partisan political bumper stickers on my personal car that I park in a federal parking lot/garage or parking lot/garage paid for by the federal government?**

Yes. A federal employee is allowed to park his or her privately owned vehicle with a normal size political bumper sticker in a government lot or garage. A federal employee may also park the car with a bumper sticker in a private lot or garage for which the employee receives a subsidy from his or her agency.

The Hatch Act prohibits federal employees from engaging in partisan political activity in the federal workplace or while on duty, but the Hatch Act regulations specifically state that an employee may place a partisan political bumper sticker on his/her personal vehicle and park that vehicle in a federal parking lot or garage.

The Office of Special Counsel has determined that an employee would not violate the Hatch Act if he/she has one normal size bumper sticker for candidate A and another normal size bumper sticker for candidate B on his/her car (in separate races) and parks that car in a federal parking lot.

Employees may NOT display other partisan political materials, or even bumper stickers, in such a way that makes the vehicle appear to be a campaign mobile.

## NATCA Activism in Local Districts

### **ALABAMA: HSV Shows New Technology to Congressman Mo Brooks**





NATCA members at Huntsville Madison County ATCT (HSV) recently hosted Alabama Congressman Mo Brooks for a tour of the facility. Led by FacRep Matthew Leach, ATM Micah Lyman, and NATCA Alabama State Legislative Coordinator Antwan Acree (Birmingham ATCT, BHM), the tour showed Brooks, his chief of staff, district director, and legislative assistant for transportation how the implementation of new technology is allowing the facility to grow with the growing industry.

"We thanked him for his support of H.R. 1108 and explained to him the challenges that we face as a facility and as an industry," Leach said. "It was actually pretty cool because we were having Integrated Departure Arrival Capability (IDAC) installation and training on the same day as the tour, so we were able to show him exactly how new technology is helping increase the efficiency of the NAS. HSV is working busier traffic than we have in over a decade."

---

## **CALIFORNIA: Members Talk Aviation with Congresswoman Barbara Lee**





Pictured left to right: ZOA ATOP Lead Donald White, California Congresswoman Barbara Lee, and California State Coordinator and ZOA Secretary Erik Mandt.

California State Coordinator and Oakland Center (ZOA) Secretary Erik Mandt and ZOA ATOP Lead Donald White had the opportunity to have lunch with California Congresswoman Barbara Lee. “As a constituent in her district, it was great to see and talk to her again,” said Mandt. “She told us she remembered us from a brunch in Washington last May. She also told us about her ties to aviation with her brother being a retired controller from the Phoenix area and her father having worked for the FAA. We thanked her for her commitment to co-sponsoring H.R. 1108. The Congresswoman has a fear of flying, but we are working with her office to coordinate a facility visit to Oakland Center.”

---

**CALIFORNIA: Members Thank Congressman Doug LaMalfa for His Support of H.R. 1108**



**Pictured left to right: NCT Legislative Rep Alton Pamintuan, California Congressman Doug LaMalfa, and Retired member Pat Burke.**

Retired member Pat Burke and Northern California TRACON (NCT) Legislative Rep Alton Pamintuan attended an event for California Congressman Doug LaMalfa. "We spoke to both Congressman LaMalfa and his Chief of Staff Mark Spannagel, at great length," said Pamintuan. "We have a great relationship with Congressman LaMalfa and we thanked him for his support of H.R. 1108."

---

## **CALIFORNIA: Members Show NATCA Solidarity at Congressman Jerry McNerney's BBQ Rib Cook-off**





**Pictured left to right: ZOA member Jared Payne, SCK member Mike Berg, SCK FacRep Mordicai Ferguson, California Congressman Jerry McNerney, OAK FacRep Kristin Simms, NCT member Jeff Jones, SCK Vice President Matthew Hohisel.**

In their fifth year attending California Congressman Jerry McNerney's BBQ Rib Cook-off, NATCA members seem to enjoy the event more and more as a solidarity reunion. "We love coming to Congressman McNerney's event," said OAK FacRep Kristin Simms, "not only because it's great to see our NATCA brothers and sisters, but also because we have a great relationship with Congressman McNerney. He is a strong supporter of NATCA and also worked with us on the GI Bill. We had the opportunity to talk with him and thanked him for his continued support of air traffic control and our Union."

---

## **FLORIDA: Members Attend Congresswoman Debbie Mucarsel-Powell's Roundtable Discussion**



Miami Center (ZMA) Legislative Rep Daniel Garcia (left) and South Florida and Caribbean State Coordinator and Miami ATCT (MIA) member Brian Lenz (right) met with Florida Congresswoman Debbie Mucarsel-Powell and approximately 30 other local union leaders in a roundtable discussion (pictured below). "All the leaders discussed their issues, and Garcia and I emphasized the importance

of H.R. 1108," said Lenz. "We shared in great detail what H.R. 1108 would fix and



stories of our brothers and sisters suffering and going without during the last government shutdown. We appreciated Congresswoman Mucarsel-Powell's time and attentiveness. She is a true supporter of unions and the working class."



**GEORGIA: Columbus ATCT Welcomes Congressman Drew Ferguson**



**Pictured left to right: CSG FacRep Wayne Weeks, Georgia Congressman Drew Ferguson, CSG Legislative Rep Derek Knapp, and Air Traffic Manager John Goodson.**

Georgia Congressman Drew Ferguson visited Columbus ATCT (CSG) with his staffer Max Kirby to tour the facilities administration office, training office, and tower. "CSG FacRep Wayne Weeks and I had the opportunity to explain our new training initiative to them and the success we are having with it," said CSG Legislative Rep Derek Knapp. "When we went to the tower, the Congressman met with and talked to our members. He asked them questions about training and their backgrounds. In the end, we thanked him for his support of H.R. 1108 and all he has done to support NATCA."

---

## **KANSAS: Members Attend Democratic Gala**



**Pictured left to right: top row Kim Davis (spouse of Jami Davis), ZKC Legislative Rep and Kansas State Coordinator Jami Davis, Missouri State Coordinator Bryan Schwappach, ECE Treasurer Ed Szczuka, MCI member David Cunningham. Pictured left to right front row: Kansas Congresswoman Sharice Davids, MCI Treasurer Kristen Mctee, MCI Vice President Lisa Cunningham, Wendy Szczuka (spouse of Ed Szczuka), New York Congressman Hakeem Jeffries.**

NATCA members recently attended the Johnson County Democratic Gala and met with Missouri Congressman Emanuel Cleaver, Kansas Congresswoman Sharice Davids, and New York Congressman Hakeem Jeffries. “We all had good conversations with the Congress members and thanked them for their support of H.R. 1108 and our Union,” said Kansas City Center (ZKC) member Jami Davis.

---

## **NEW JERSEY: Members Show Support at Congressman Bill Pascrell's End of Summer Event**





Newark ATCT (EWR) VP James Lovett, EWR Treasurer Chris Mitrotasios, and Teterboro ATCT (TEB) Legislative Rep Carlos Wyre attended Congressman Bill Pascrell's End of Summer event in Garfield, N.J. "At the event, we were able to thank Congressman Pascrell and his Chief of Staff Ben Rich for their support of H.R. 1108 and for their continued support of our Union and profession," said Lovett.

## NEW YORK: Congresswoman AOC Visits JFK



JFK member Carlos Montilla with New York Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez



JFK member Jessenia Diaz with New York Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

Members of Congress from New York, Adriano Espaillat and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez visited John F. Kennedy ATCT (JFK). "During the visit, I introduced myself to both members of Congress, thanked them for taking time out of their schedule to visit, extended an open invite to visit JFK ATCT again, and thanked them for their support of aviation and NATCA as a union," said JFK FacRep Gerald Quaye. "Both Espaillat and Ocasio-Cortez interacted and conversed with controllers while in the tower cab."



## NATCA Policy Change: Cellular Service National Level Reimbursement Policy

The NATCA National Executive Board (NEB) discussed supporting labor friendly wireless carriers and voted unanimously that effective Nov. 1, 2019, NATCA will provide reimbursement from the national level only for preferred wireless service providers. It was decided that a wireless service provider whose employees are represented nationally by an AFL-CIO union could be considered a NATCA-preferred wireless service provider. Currently, AT&T is the only major U.S. wireless carrier with a union-represented workforce. About half of AT&T's employees are union-represented, primarily by the Communications Workers of

America and the International Brotherhood of-Electrical Workers.

This policy applies only to members seeking reimbursement from the national level. It's does not affect local reimbursement. If you have questions about this new policy, email [natcanationaloffice@natcadc.org](mailto:natcanationaloffice@natcadc.org).

## NiW 2020: Save the Date



**Save the Date: NiW 2020, March 23-25 at Marriott Marquis  
Earlier Date and NEW Location!**

NATCA | [www.natca.org](http://www.natca.org)

