



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE



Honoring Paul Rinaldi & Trish Gilbert for Their Legislative Activism

**By Richard Kennington, Chair, National Legislative Committee and
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In this legislative update, we look at the legacy of two of NATCA's activists who got their start the way all legislative activists do. They committed to building a relationship with their member of Congress and then put in the effort to make that happen. Those relationships still exist today. President Paul Rinaldi and Executive Vice President Trish Gilbert

went on to fill the biggest roles in our organization, but they never lost sight of the most influential person in NATCA's legislative efforts: the member activist.

As they retire from their current roles in NATCA in coming days, they are leaving a legacy of commitment, hard work, and success. During their time in office, NATCA's status on Capitol Hill has grown significantly. Members of Congress, who have addressed our membership at NATCA in Washington, have spoken about how respected our organization is because of Paul and Trish's leadership. Other aviation and labor groups, much larger than our own, have approached NATCA to try and understand why we are so strong, active, and successful.

If you ask them, they will tell you that they are not responsible for all the successes. The membership is. And they are right. While both of them attended fundraisers, took meetings with members of Congress, and testified on Capitol Hill, what matters most was everything they did to empower member activists to get involved, build relationships, and educate their elected officials. It is that relationship building and education that explains NATCA's legislative successes. Importantly, the legislative work will continue, and victories will be won long after they are gone, because of the strong foundation created during their tenure.

How do you honor two people who have served the membership so well for

years? We feel that the greatest honor we can give them is to emulate them and continue to advance the status, professionalism, and working conditions of all air traffic controllers and other aviation safety-related professionals.

Paul and Trish have provided a roadmap that we can all follow to leave our own meaningful legacy. We may not hold the titles they did, but we can hold the most important one of member activist. We simply need to commit to building a relationship with our member of Congress and then put in the effort to make that happen. We accept the challenge to build upon the incredible legislative foundation and legacy that these two member activists leave behind.

Government Affairs Department Update

Senate Passes Bipartisan Infrastructure Package, Includes \$5 Billion for ATC Improvements

The U.S. Senate passed the bipartisan infrastructure package by a vote of 69-30 on Aug. 10. Also called the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), this critical legislation includes \$5 billion for various air traffic control (ATC) facility and infrastructure improvements. NATCA activists from around the country successfully lobbied their senators, urging support for the bipartisan legislation and educating them about why the funding for air traffic control facilities is an integral component of infrastructure. Meanwhile, NATCA's Government Affairs (GA) Department, along with NATCA's policy team, examined more than 350 amendments that were submitted and pushed back on several problematic amendments, ensuring they did not receive a vote.

While the \$5 billion for ATC upgrades will not fix every known and unknown deficiency, this investment—when combined with annual Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) facilities and equipment appropriations—represents a major step in the right direction. If enacted into law, the FAA will be required to submit a more detailed spending plan to Congress that includes projects for specific facilities. The legislation now heads to the U.S. House of Representatives, where prospects are uncertain. Democratic leadership will likely wait to vote on IIJA until they have also formulated a plan for a larger “reconciliation” spending package that includes other funding and policy priorities (more on that below). NATCA will continue to advocate for passage and enactment of IIJA in the weeks ahead.

Annual Budget Resolution Triggers Another “Vote-a-Rama” in Senate

Shortly after passing the infrastructure bill, the Senate passed on a party line vote an annual budget resolution, which acts as a framework so that House and Senate committees can assemble a large “reconciliation” package of various funding priorities. Senate consideration of the budget resolution includes what is commonly referred to as a “Vote-A-Rama,” a process where unlimited amendments can be considered. This time, almost 50 amendments were processed over the course of 15 hours into the early hours of the morning. GA staff carefully monitored this process to ensure problematic amendments were not considered. If the House also approves the budget resolution, various congressional committees will assemble parts of the reconciliation package that

will then be combined into a single bill for floor consideration in both chambers. Unlike the IIJA, this package is much broader and is not expected to receive Republican support. Relevant to NATCA, the budget resolution process requires careful scrutiny to ensure that members of Congress are not voting on any amendments that would be harmful to NATCA and its membership.

Sept. 30 Funding Deadline and Debt Ceiling Debate Looming

Government funding is set to expire on Sept. 30. Meanwhile, the Senate is on its annual August recess until Sept. 13, and the House came back from recess on Aug. 23. Adding to the mix of uncertainty in Congress is the need to raise the debt ceiling in the coming weeks or months.

As a reminder, the House has already passed its fiscal year 2022 Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (THUD) appropriations bill that includes FAA funding, but the Senate has yet to consider any of the 12 annual funding bills on the floor. Therefore, it is virtually certain that a temporary continuing resolution (CR) will be needed to keep the FAA and other federal agencies operating after Sept. 30.

At the same time, the nation's statutory debt limit must be adjusted upward to pay for recent federal spending that has already occurred. The Treasury Department believes this needs to occur in September to avoid an unprecedented default on U.S. debt. Suspending or adjusting the debt ceiling used to be a relatively routine matter, but in recent years it has become more difficult for Congress to achieve. Republican leadership has stated they will not provide any support to lift the debt ceiling unless Democrats agree to budgetary reforms that they are unlikely to approve. This standoff between Republicans and Democrats has the potential to make the month of September a hectic one on Capitol Hill.

NATCA is carefully monitoring the debt ceiling debate especially as it relates to the Sept. 30 government funding deadline.

Grassroots in Local Districts

ARIZONA



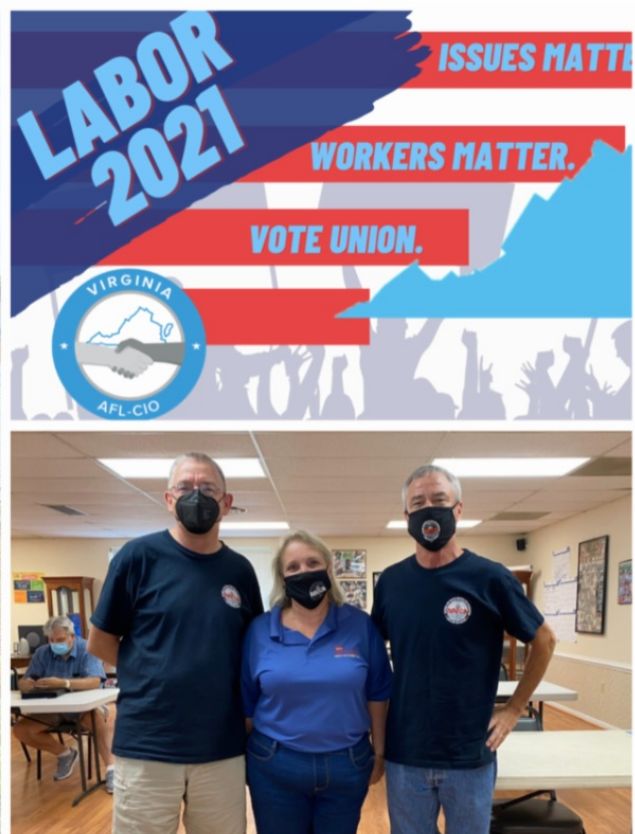
Boots on the Ground (BOTG) members Chuck Muñoz and Todd Laveen have been assigned full-time for the month of August and September in support of the Arizona AFL-CIO's PRO Act member-to-member outreach program.

The program is designed to ensure union members are fully educated on the importance of the PRO Act and encourage members to reach out to their Senators to urge their support. This is currently being done by contacting local union leaders, social media, worksite leafletting, postcards, phone banks, and door-to-door canvassing.

Many of the methods used to ensure members health and safety in the Labor 2020 effort are continuing to be used in 2021. Virtual meetings, phone banks, social distancing, masks, and other preventive measures have proven themselves to be effective methods to keeping our members safe while getting the job done.

Muñoz and Laveen are utilizing their roles in previous Boots cycles to fill valuable leadership roles in this extremely important effort for the broader labor movement.

VIRGINIA



BOTG members John Carr, Margaret Summers, and Bob Zabel have officially started their full-time assignment to assist the Virginia AFL-CIO with their Labor 2021 member-to-member program. Carr and Zabel are the zone leads in Northern Virginia, while Summers is the zone lead in Eastern Virginia.

The offices on the ballot this year in Virginia are Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, House of Delegates, as well as a few local offices. The first day of in-person early-voting in Virginia starts Sept. 17, with Election Day being Tuesday, Nov. 2.

If you have questions or would like to know how you can volunteer to help this or any other BOTG effort, please contact Boots Program Manager Tom Thompson at thomas.thompson@natca.net.

WASHINGTON

Washington
Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers recently had the opportunity to visit Spokane ATCT (GEG). “We discussed a lot of topics and thanked her for co-sponsoring H.R. 1283, the Continuity for Operators with Necessary Training Required for ATC Contract Towers (CONTRACT) Act of 2021 back in March,” said GEG member Ray Peters. “We



also talked to her about H.R. 4042, The Aviation Funding Stability Act of 2021.”

After visiting GEG, she posted on Facebook, “It was great to see the work Eastern Washington air traffic controllers are doing to keep passengers from across the country safe at the Spokane Airport. Their vigorous training procedures are impressive and will ensure the next generation of air traffic controllers are equipped to do the same. Thanks so much for the warm welcome and the chance to tour the Spokane Tower!”

If you would like to help with NATCA’s legislative success, we can use all the member activists we can get. You can contact your NLC member by visiting natca.org/nlc. There is a place for you.

Upcoming Special Elections

NATCA encourages all members and their families to participate in the democratic process. [NATCA's Member Voter Center](#) is a year-round resource to find links on how to register to vote and continuous information about upcoming special elections. Below are the dates:

Ohio 11th and 15th Congressional Districts

Special General Election Date - Nov. 2

Florida 20th Congressional District

Special Primary Election Date - Nov. 2

Special General Election Date - Jan. 11, 2022



Legislative Resources

Ballotpedia: [Click here.](#)

National Legislative Committee: Roster, contacts, information - [Click here.](#)

State Legislative Coordinators contact list [Click here.](#)

U.S. Senate: Numbers of facilities, members, and bargaining unit members in each state - [Click here.](#)

U.S. House of Representatives: Facilities and numbers of members in each congressional district - [Click here.](#)

Legislative Updates on natca.org: [Click here.](#)

Archive of past monthly legislative updates: [Click here.](#)

