



LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

NATCA Seeks Relief for Workforce During COVID-19 Pandemic

Senior leadership from NATCA and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) continue to collaborate frequently on ways to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on the National Airspace System (NAS). Each day, NATCA is fighting for the health and safety of the members of our Union who operate and support it.

The NATCA Government Affairs staff also has been aggressively working to advocate for legislation to ensure the safest possible working conditions for air traffic controllers and aviation safety professionals who continue to go into work.

The House recently passed a second stimulus package, H.R. 6800 (the HEROES Act), commonly referred to as “CARES 2.0,” that contains many provisions that, if enacted, would help protect NATCA’s members. However, the package faces steep opposition and is not expected to become law. Nevertheless, it is the first step in the process for additional legislation addressing COVID-19. As Congress continues to deliberate this legislation in the coming weeks, and possibly months, NATCA will continue to fight tirelessly on behalf of the workforce we represent to raise the volume on our critical priorities.

Below is a list of provisions included in the CARES 2.0 legislation related to the health and safety of NATCA’s membership, as well as the safe and efficient operation of the NAS.

- **Trust Fund Fix** – Proposes a fix for the Airport and Airway Trust Fund to allow it to meet its obligations in light of drastically reduced trust fund revenues.
- **Additional FAA Funding** – Proposes an additional \$75 million for the FAA Operations Account to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19.
- **Hazard Pay Differential** – Proposes a \$13 per hour hazard pay differential for all essential federal employees including FAA employees, capped at the Administrator’s pay including all pay and premiums for the year.
- **Annuity Protection for Retirement** – Proposes the ability for air traffic controllers to continue in the increased annuity calculation in the event they lose their medical qualifications due to COVID-19-related illness.
- **National Aviation Preparedness Plan** – Proposes a mandate for the Department of Transportation (DOT) to develop a National Aviation Preparedness plan. NATCA would be one of the stakeholders that would consult with DOT on the plan.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** – Proposes a requirement that the FAA ensure its facilities are cleaned according to Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention guidance, and that employees are provided masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, and alcohol wipes.

- **OSHA Emergency Temporary Standard** – Proposes a temporary standard to protect workers from COVID-19 in the workplace.

Senate Commerce Committee Considers Legislation to Protect NATCA Workforce

The Senate Commerce Committee held a markup on May 20 during which legislation was considered that would, if enacted, offer protections to the workforce NATCA represents. NATCA worked closely with Committee members and staff to ensure air traffic controllers and aviation safety professionals were included in both pieces of legislation.

S. 3681: This legislation would require a joint task force and advisory committee on the operation of air travel during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The task force would be made up of government representatives, including the Federal Aviation Administration. The advisory committee would be made up of stakeholders, including NATCA. S. 3681 passed the committee by voice vote. This legislation was introduced by Senators Ed Markey, D-Mass., and Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn.

S. 3728, Critical Infrastructure Employee Protection Act of 2020: This legislation would require the Secretary of Transportation to support state/local governments in providing priority COVID-19 testing for essential critical infrastructure employees for COVID-19, and priority access to personal protective equipment, sanitizer, face coverings, etc. The definition of “essential critical infrastructure workers” includes air traffic controllers and other aviation safety employees. The Committee did not vote on S. 3728 during the markup due to substantial last-minute amendments that needed more time to be dealt with. The committee hopes to work on those amendments and get the bill back on track. This legislation was introduced by Senators Roger Wicker, R-Miss., Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., Dan Sullivan, R-Alaska, and Todd Young, R-Ind.

NATCA GA will provide updates as these bills move forward in the legislative process.

Advocating for Paid Parental Leave for FAA Employees

On May 13, NATCA signed a [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\) with the Federal Aviation Administration \(FAA\)](#) to provide 12 weeks of paid parental leave for qualifying events occurring on or after Oct. 1, 2020. This benefit covers all members employed by FAA.

NATCA is also advocating to ensure this benefit is enacted into law and available for both current and future generations of NATCA members. We are continuing to aggressively advocate for a technical correction to fix the loophole that inadvertently excluded FAA employees and five other federal employee workforces in the paid parental leave proposal enacted in December as part of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 (NDAA; P.L. 116-92).

National Office Government Affairs staff has been working with congressional leadership, members of Congress and staff, as well as relevant committees, including the Armed Services Committees in the House and Senate, to address this issue. We are considering all potential legislative vehicles to provide a technical correction that ensures both current and future FAA workforces can access the paid parental leave.

NATCA's GA staff will continue to provide updates here as a technical fix for paid parental leave moves through the legislative process.

H.R. 1108/S. 762 Aviation Funding Stability Act

The Aviation Funding Stability Act (H.R. 1108/S. 762) was introduced following the 35-day government shutdown that wreaked havoc on the National Airspace System and our workforce. If enacted, this legislation would ensure that the system continues to fully operate, without interruption, in the event of a government shutdown. The government shutdown, and now the COVID-19 national emergency, have highlighted the need for a stable, predictable funding stream for the Federal Aviation Administration, and this legislation is critical to achieve that.

Background: H.R. 1108 was introduced by Reps. Peter DeFazio, D-Ore., Chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and Rick Larsen, D-Wash., Chairman of the Aviation Subcommittee. The lead Republican on the legislation is Rep. Bob Gibbs, R-Ohio, a senior member of the House T&I Committee. In the Senate, Senator Jerry Moran, R-Kan., introduced S. 762, which is identical to H.R. 1108.

H.R. 1108: This bill has gained broad, bipartisan support and now has 293 co-sponsors. Co-sponsors can continue to be added until the T&I Committee files an official "Committee Report," which is a document accompanying a bill that has been reported from a committee. The report contains an explanation of the provisions of the bill, arguments for its approval, votes held in markup, individual committee members' opinions, dissenting opinions, cost estimates, and other information.

S. 762: NATCA in Washington 2019 served as the launching pad for NATCA's advocacy on this bill, which has garnered 13 bipartisan co-sponsors.

Congressional Schedule

The congressional schedule has been evolving constantly due to the COVID-19 national emergency. The House was in session yesterday, May 27, and again today, May 28, while the Senate will be back in session the week of June 1. Although the House has relied on "pro forma" and emergency sessions to hold votes, the Senate has been in session since early May and continues to vote and hold committee hearings in-person.

The House recently passed a resolution that authorizes remote voting by proxy and allows official committee proceedings to happen remotely during COVID-19

In the House, conversations related to additional legislation addressing COVID-19 are ongoing. House committees will move forward with hearings and markups, and begin consideration of must-pass legislation, including the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), fiscal year 2021 appropriations bills, as well as surface transportation and water reauthorization measures. Meanwhile, the Senate's agenda will continue to focus primarily on confirming key administration and judicial nominees.

NLC Helps Kick Off NATCA Academy Virtual Learning With Politics Class



On May 13 and May 23, the National Legislative Committee (NLC) held an online class as part of the new NATCA Academy Virtual Learning program titled "You Hate Politics Too? Let's Talk." The class dispelled myths that most Americans hold as truths about government, politicians, and money in the legislative process.

"We discussed where NATCA fits in politically and why we have to be the ones involved in advocating for us and our profession," said NLC Chair Richard Kennington (Portland, Ore., ATCT, PDX). "The main takeaway from the class was

that NATCA must build relationships with every member of Congress and educate them on our issues, so that they can advocate for us."

NLC Vice Chair Trisha Pesiri-Dybvik (Santa Barbara ATCT, SBA) and Alternate Southern Region NLC Representative Anthony Schifano (Charlotte ATCT, CLT) both gave examples of relationships they built with California Senator Kamala Harris and former North Carolina Congressman Mark Meadows, respectively. Harris is now mentioned as a potential Democratic vice presidential candidate and Meadows, who spoke at NATCA in Washington 2019, is the new White House chief of staff. "These two powerful examples demonstrate what NATCA's grassroots activism can do," Kennington said.

Pesiri-Dybvik said the NLC was excited to take one of its best and most informative classes online.

"Despite these challenging times, the important legislative work of our Union continues," she said. "The ability to speak directly to our members and share the significant role they play in NATCA's legislative efforts cannot be understated. Every single involved member helps make a collective difference in our advocacy on Capitol Hill. Richard and Steve Weidner (former NLC Chair, now NATCA 2020 Campaign Coordinator) did a phenomenal job instructing this convenient and enlightening online one-hour workshop."

Pictured above, clockwise from top left: Ryan Herrick (Minneapolis TRACON, M98), Christina Munro and FacRep Alex Cisneros (Southern California TRACON, SCT), Cynthia Lowther (Philadelphia ATCT, PHL), and Carlton Wickstrom (Phoenix TRACON, P50).

Hatch Act Tip of the Month

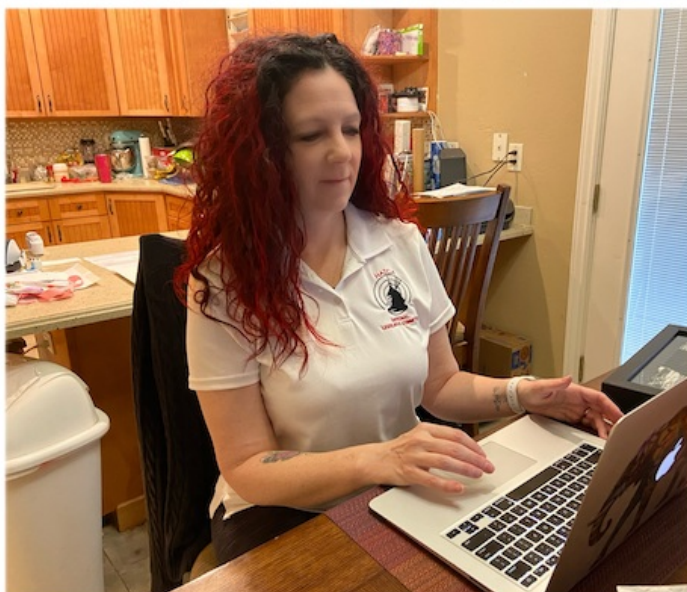
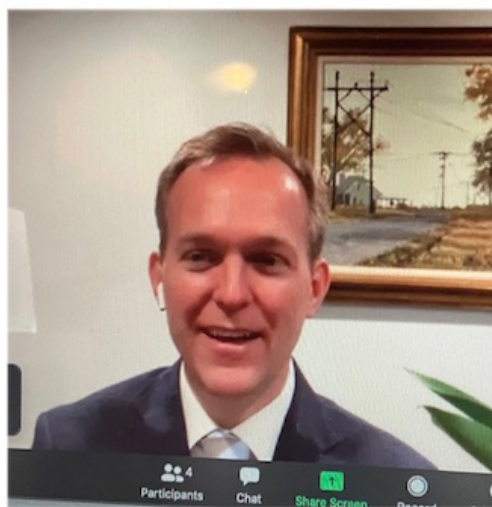
Federal employees may not solicit, accept, or receive campaign contributions. Federal employee NATCA members may not suggest or ask anyone to make political contributions at any time. Thus, they should neither provide links to the political contribution page of any partisan group or candidate in a partisan race nor "like," "share," or "retweet" a solicitation from one of those entities, including an invitation to a political fundraising event. An employee may accept an invitation to a political fundraising event from such entities via Facebook or Twitter as long as they are not on duty or in the workplace.

The NATCA PAC is the only limited exception for NATCA members, but solicitations should not occur on duty nor on federal property. They should also not be made on social media.

If you have questions about the Hatch Act, [ask your NLC member](#) or send your questions to hatchactquestions@natca.net.

Virtual Grassroots NATCA Activism

NORTHWEST MOUNTAIN REGION: UTAH



Salt Lake Center (ZLC) NATCA members Tyler Ellis (pictured top left and bottom right) and Caryn Morrison (bottom left) had a virtual meeting with Rep. Ben McAdams (top right) and his Chief of Staff Nichole Dunn.

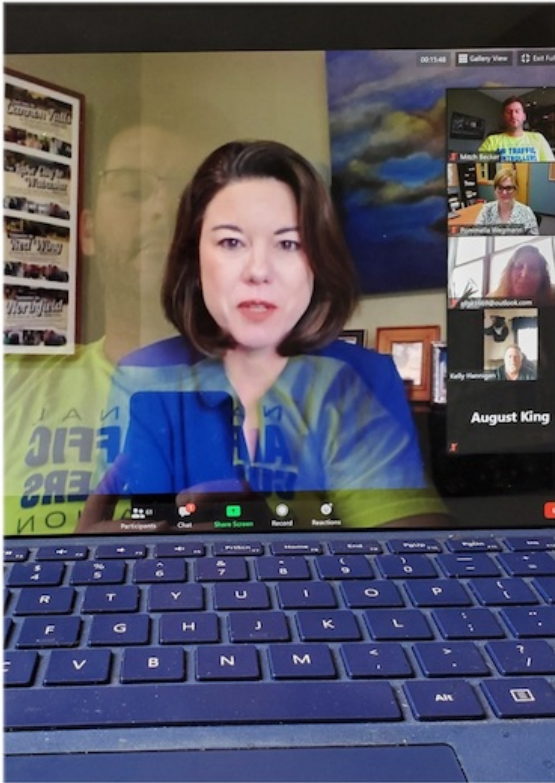
"I started the call by asking Representative McAdams how he was feeling since recovering from COVID-19," said Morrison, who serves as the alternate Northwest Mountain Region representative on the National Legislative Committee. "He said he's feeling much better and that was the sickest he's ever been in his life."

During the meeting, Morrison and Ellis spoke about dynamic scheduling and the reasoning behind why NATCA initiated it. They also discussed current traffic levels and how air traffic controllers will change the way they are scheduling once the traffic volume increases.

"It was a quick 10- minute call but it was nice to check in after not having spoken to the Congressman and his staff in awhile," Morrison said. "We have a really great relationship with this office and are looking forward to doing whatever we can to help with his campaign."

Dunn mentioned to Ellis how much she loves the bright yellow NATCA shirt he wore on the call. "They really do stand out!" Morrison said.

GREAT LAKES REGION: MINNESOTA



Minnesota State Legislative Coordinator Mitch Becker (Minneapolis Center, ZMP) recently participated in a video conference labor roundtable with Congresswoman Angie Craig, discussing and asking for input on what future COVID-19 relief bills should contain to help workers.

“She talked quite a bit about ensuring workers are protected in future COVID bills as well as ensuring essential employees are able to secure PPE (personal protective equipment) needed to protect them on the job,” Becker said. “She also touched on pursuing electronic voting in union elections through the Federal Labor Relations Authority.”

Craig accepted questions and comments from the 60 participants via the chat option in the video conference. Becker provided a thank you message on behalf of NATCA and offered information regarding what NATCA and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) are doing with adjusted facility hours to combat the spread of COVID-19.

NORTHWEST MOUNTAIN REGION: WASHINGTON



NATCAvists Denise Spencer (Seattle Center, ZSE) and Mark Bonner (Everett Paine Field ATCT, PAE) participated in a Zoom call with House Aviation Subcommittee Chairman Rick Larsen, D-Wash., on May 20 along with several local business people. Larsen spoke for 20 minutes and then asked Spencer for an update on air traffic control.

“I told him things were going much better in regards to cleanliness and supplies for that in the facilities,” she said. “Also, we talked about staffing and how the FAA and NATCA are working very well together in keeping the employees safe with the dynamic scheduling and separate crews in case of positive COVID-19 cases. I spoke about how traffic was down significantly, but coming back just slightly.”

CENTRAL REGION: KANSAS



Kansas State Legislative Coordinator Jami Davis, fellow Kansas City Center (ZKC) member Nathan Burch, and Kansas City ATCT (MCI) member Kristen McTee joined Congresswoman Sharice Davids for her monthly labor roundtable meeting via video conference recently.

Davids told participants that she is working to host more frequent virtual town hall meetings so that she can keep in touch with the people she represents. She said the committees have still been working on appropriations bills for the 2021 budget in addition to the COVID-19 bills.

“We thanked her for her continuous support since being elected and her office’s continuous contact throughout the pandemic,” Davis said.

NORTHWEST MOUNTAIN REGION: OREGON



Portland, Ore., ATCT (PDX) members Terry Sullivan and Lisa Gilmore have been working on building and maintaining NATCA's Congressional relationships in Oregon. Currently, that just means making a few phone calls.

Members of Congress, like everyone else, are largely suspending travel and staying at home, meaning now is a great time for their constituents to connect with them via phone.

"We had some productive phone calls with several Oregon members of Congress," Sullivan said. "It gave us the opportunity to explain our new schedule so they understand why we're doing it. Although we prefer face-to-face, as I'm sure they do as well, a phone call is actually an opportunity for us to get them one-on-one."

Pictured above, from left to right: Terry Sullivan (Portland, Ore., ATCT, PDX), Congressman Kurt Schrader, D-Ore., 5th District, Lisa Gilmore (PDX), and Alex Knapp (PDX). NOTE: This photo was taken before recommended social distancing and mask guidelines were issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Boots on the ... Web, For Now: Remote Activism Brings Challenges



NATCA Boots on the Ground members Bob and Valerie Butterworth officially started their 2020 Boots cycle for Pennsylvania on May 1 — remotely. Both Bob and Valerie are an integral part of the Pennsylvania AFL-CIO's state-level planning each cycle. With the COVID-19 national emergency bringing many changes to the way the Boots program will operate this year, Bob and Valerie are providing updates on their activism-from-home experience.

"The working from home experience has been an interesting one to say the least," Valerie said. "It has taken some time to get adjusted to all the significant changes to our workday that were unexpected."

Because the Boots program no longer has a walking or worksite leafleting program, they needed to make big adjustments. The Butterworths are part of the state's effort to roll out the revised campaign plan for 2020, a significant part of which is organizing local union coordinators. Nearly 1,600 locals in Pennsylvania need a coordinator to be the direct line of communication to Union members, and Valerie and Bob help identify these coordinators.

"We have had tremendous support from the Pennsylvania team as always, and it's great to be back working with them," Bob said. "One of the benefits of video calls is that we've been able to reconnect with many of our Union brothers and sisters quickly. Frankly, it's been a challenge but we're proud to be part of it."

News and Notes

As Published in Federal News Network: The Senate is interested in changing up benefits for a group of federal retirees - contract tower air traffic controllers: Air traffic controllers in the Federal Aviation Administration typically must retire by age 56. Most receive supplemental annuity payments,

which are phased out after a certain amount of earned income, until they reach age 62, when they can collect Social Security benefits.

A bipartisan group of senators last year had [introduced legislation](#) that would allow certain air traffic controllers to receive full annuity supplements even if their income exceeded the usual limit.

This particular Senate bill, called the CONTRACT Act, would allow controllers who work in FAA contract towers to collect full supplemental annuity benefits without the usual income limits.

The Congressional Budget Office recently [scored](#) the bill and found it would have an “insignificant” impact on federal spending, \$1.5 million a year.

Sen. Moran Thanks Controllers During Senate Commerce Committee Hearing

The CONTRACT Act was discussed during the Senate Commerce Committee's hearing on May 6, entitled, “The State of the Aviation Industry: Examining the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic.” Senator Jerry Moran, R-Kan., in talking about the legislation, went out of his way to publicly make a point and thank all the traffic controllers for the hard work they’ve been doing during this challenging time. [View video clip](#)



ALASKA: Anchorage Center (ZAN) FacRep Letter to the Editor Published in Anchorage Daily News

Thanks Sen. Sullivan

As an air traffic controller and president of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) Local ZAN, I'd like to recognize Sen. Dan Sullivan for his steadfast commitment to protect all Alaskans during this unprecedented time.

COVID-19 has touched all aspects of the U.S. economy, and aviation is no exception. As NATCA works with the Federal Aviation Administration, or FAA, to

mitigate the effects of the pandemic on the National Airspace System, I would like to thank Sen. Sullivan for ensuring the voices of Alaska's essential employees – including more than 400 air traffic controllers and aviation safety professionals NATCA represents – are heard loud and clear in Washington, D.C.

Sen. Sullivan has been a strong advocate for NATCA's members, especially those in Alaska, most recently becoming the first senator to cosponsor critical legislation - S. 762, the Aviation Funding Stability Act - that would allow the FAA to continue to operate in the event of a government shutdown.

I applaud Sen. Sullivan and I am confident he will lead Alaska through this challenging time.

Rob Kindred
President, NATCA Local ZAN

NATCA in Washington 2020



Due to the COVID-19 national emergency, NATCA in Washington has been rescheduled for Dec. 9-11, 2020. The location remains at the Marriott Marquis in Washington, D.C. We are preparing for another successful event where our top-notch activists will spend time on Capitol Hill, advocating on behalf of our NATCA membership to elected officials about the critical work of air traffic controllers and aviation safety professionals. [Click here](#) to visit the NiW page for updates.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

This Month in 2010: A Copy of the Red Book Contract Was Presented to House T&I Chairman Oberstar at NiW as Thanks for His Courageous Leadership



On May 25, 2010, at NATCA in Washington, NATCA President Paul Rinaldi proudly presented a copy of the 2009 Red Book Collective Bargaining Agreement onstage to one of the most loyal and passionate Congressional champions NATCA has ever had, then-House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman James Oberstar, D-Minn. The Red Book ended the lost years of the White Book, during which Oberstar fought hard for NATCA members and joined their collective strength to earn back their rights to collectively bargain.

He reflected on his own union heritage through his father's involvement with the steelworkers' union and how that affected both his childhood and how he conducted himself as an adult and legislator. At one point in his speech, Oberstar clutched the Red Book and said, "Giving this to me is like giving me Dad back." After the speech, NATCA Executive Vice President Trish Gilbert joined Oberstar and Rinaldi onstage (pictured above).

In 2005, Oberstar was presented with NATCA's first Sentinel of Safety Award. In October 2014, a few months after Oberstar's death, Rinaldi chaired the 15th Biennial Convention in Oberstar's home state of Minnesota where NATCA renamed the award after him while welcoming his wife, Jean.

Oberstar didn't just talk about unions or work with unions. He WAS union. He once famously told a gathering of NATCA members that the National Airspace

System and aviation safety was “in your hands. Good hands. Great hands. Great minds. Great people. NATCA people.”

Legislative Resources

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](#).

NATCA in Washington 2020: [Click here](#).

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

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

