

MEC Government Affairs



As your MEC Government Affairs Chairperson, I want to make some clarifications as to the recent email from HNL flight attendant Martin Gusman regarding the 10-hour rest rule which has yet to be implemented and is about our safety and the safety of our passengers. AFA has been working on the 10-hour rest rule since before the pilots got their FAA mandated 10-hour rest.

In June of 2018 HNL LEC President Jaci-Ann Chung and I attended a CWA convention in Washington, DC which included over 80 AFA government affairs activists from almost all AFA carriers. We met with members of Congress asking for their support for of the FAA Reauthorization Bill to be voted on in the fall of 2018. This bill included much more than the 10-hour rest which would improve our lives as flight attendants. The 10-hour rest rule follows the pilots – 10-hours rest from check out until check in, non-reducible. Completely by chance we bumped into Blain Miyasato and Margaret Cummisky, HA's lobbyist in DC. It was then we first learned of the company not supporting the rest rule, but up to that point nothing was said by the company to AFA about their stance.

As the bill moved towards a vote in the House and Senate our MEC President Sharon Soper received a call from management wanting AFA's support on a carve out for Hawaiian on the rest rule. I was included on several conference calls with the AFA leadership to discuss the possibilities of trying to get a carve out in the final writing of the bill which was not a guarantee. I was included because of my position as the MEC Government Affairs Chairperson.

The company's position was they were "blindsided" by this rest rule and had just learned about it, which was not true as we knew the company did not support it back in June. We asked many questions as to how the rule would affect our flying, why the FAs couldn't mirror the pilots with a few 3 day trips and still maintain 2 day trips, could they do a trial bid run with the 10-hour rest, and what would be the monetary loss for the company. Management asked that we give them a few days to get back to us however when they did get back to us they were unable to answer most of our questions but did list about 9 pairings which could potentially be affected.

The FAA Reauthorization Bill passed in October of 2018. My Government Affairs updates distributed via email announced the passing of the 10-hour rest ruling and why it was being held up by the Department of Transportation. I have asked crew planning on more than one occasion if and when they were going to implement the new rule. Their response was when we get an official directive from the government. Many AFA carriers have already chosen to implement the rule.

In closing I assure you that the decision on the carve out was a collaborative discussion between myself, the LEC and MEC officers. I encourage everyone to vote in the LEC officer elections and choose your candidate with knowledge and confidence.

Stronger Together and Always in Unity,

Rick Schwabauer
MEC Government Affairs Chair