

RICK SANTORUM
PENNSYLVANIA

REPUBLICAN CONFERENCE
CHAIRMAN

WASHINGTON, DC
511 DIRKSEN SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510
(202) 224-6324

COMMITTEES:
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United States Senate

<http://santorum.senate.gov>

May 2, 2006

The Honorable Marion Blakey
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Administrator Blakey:

As the FAA and the National Air Traffic Controllers Association have carried on their contract talks over the past nine months, I have heard regularly from my constituents on the status of the talks and the importance of a voluntary resolution. Now that the talks have broken down, an impasse declared, and the contract dispute sent to the Congress, they are particularly concerned about the potential outcome of the process.

It is very important that in the resolution of this dispute, the safety of our skies and of air travel be maintained. Our air traffic controllers are crucial to this safety. For this reason, I encourage you to take all appropriate steps to reach a voluntary agreement with the air traffic controllers instead of pursuing resolution of this matter in the Congress. It has been my longstanding position that it is not the role of Congress to intervene in a labor dispute on the side of labor or management. The fact that the law allows for this disputed contract to be sent to the Congress makes this situation unique. It is greatly preferable that the final resolution be that of a negotiated agreement. This will benefit the FAA, the air traffic controllers, and the American people. It is also important that the existing agreement with the air traffic controllers be maintained until the contract differences can be resolved.

I appreciate your hard work and leadership in rejuvenating the airline industry in the wake of the September 11 attacks. Similarly, the work of air traffic controllers in ensuring the safety of air traffic is vital. I stand ready to help in any way that I can in order to see this issue resolved.

Sincerely,



Rick Santorum
United States Senate

ALLENTOWN
3802 FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING
504 WEST HAMILTON STREET
ALLENTOWN, PA 18105
(610) 770-0142

ALTOONA
REGENCY SQUARE
SUITE 202
ROUTE 220 NORTH
ALTOONA, PA 16601
(814) 946-7023

COUDERSPORT
81 MARVIN HILL ROAD
COUDERSPORT, PA 16915
(814) 454-7114

ERIE
1705 WEST 26TH STREET
ERIE, PA 16508
(814) 454-7114

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555 WALNUT STREET
FIRST FLOOR
HARRISBURG, PA 17101
(717) 231-7540

PHILADELPHIA
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ONE SOUTH PENN SQUARE
SUITE 960
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19107
(215) 864-6900

PITTSBURGH
100 WEST STATION SQUARE DRIVE
LANDMARKS BUILDING
SUITE 250
PITTSBURGH, PA 15219
(412) 562-0533

SCRANTON
THE RITZ BUILDING
222 WYOMING AVENUE
SCRANTON, PA 18503
(570) 344-8799