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## **FLIGHT ATTENDANTS ONE STEP CLOSER TO FMLA COVERAGE**

*U.S. House of Representatives Passes Flight Attendant FMLA Bill by Substantial Majority*

Washington, DC – Flight attendants today are one step closer to qualifying for coverage under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) after the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Airline Flight Crew Technical Corrections Act, H.R. 2744, by a wide margin of 402 to 9. For 15 years, flight attendants and other airline employees have had difficulty qualifying for FMLA coverage due to the Act's language which makes it extremely difficult for employees with unique timekeeping methods to meet the defined minimum number of hours worked.

“Today is a major victory for the tens of thousands of airline workers who have repeatedly been denied access to this vital law that has benefited working families for over a decade,” said Patricia Friend, Association of Flight Attendants-CWA (AFA-CWA) International President. “We applaud Rep. Tim Bishop [D-NY] for his leadership in introducing this bill over a year ago, and to the 241 bipartisan co-sponsors who understood and appreciated its significance. We have been working for years to clarify current FMLA language and thanks to the tens of thousands of letters and phone calls from AFA-CWA flight attendants to their representatives, we were able to press the importance of this issue and reach this historic milestone.”

The FMLA requires most employers to provide job-protected unpaid leave to employees who have worked 60 percent of a full-time schedule over the course of a year. However, the courts and federal agencies disregarded that original intent and narrowly defined the “full time schedule” as that of a traditional 40 hour work week, thereby excluding any employee that does not fall within the traditional work day. This concept does not work for flight attendants because time spent between trips, whether during the day or on overnights, does not count towards their time at work. Despite the fact that some flight attendants may be away from home for up to 20 days a month while working, it is virtually impossible for a full time flight attendant to meet the annual threshold of 1,250 hours.

“For years, AFA-CWA has had to negotiate flight attendants’ right to have access to this important coverage that millions of Americans are automatically guaranteed. This important bill finally brings fairness and equity to the thousands of unique individuals who provide an essential service to our nation,” said Friend.

A Senate version of the bill, S. 2059, introduced by Senator Hillary Clinton (D-NY), has 26 bipartisan co-sponsors.

*For over 60 years, the Association of Flight Attendants has been serving as the voice for flight attendants in the workplace, in the aviation industry, in the media and on Capitol Hill. More than 55,000 flight attendants at 20 airlines come together to form AFA-CWA, the world's largest flight attendant union. AFA is part of the 700,000-member strong Communications Workers of America (CWA), AFL-CIO. Visit us at [www.afanet.org](http://www.afanet.org).*

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