

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS



April 5, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

You have often said that our country needs leaders to stand up for American workers. We, as pilots at five U.S. based cargo airlines, are writing to ask you to stand with us in calling on DHL, the German shipping company, to respect U.S. aviation law and stop lowering U.S. industry standards in pay and quality of life. We take tremendous pride in supplying our communities with the goods they need, but we cannot continue to work under the influence of a foreign company that is destabilizing the livelihoods of American pilots and manipulating the law.

The companies that we work for – Atlas Air, Southern Air, Polar Air, ABX Air and Kalitta Air – are responsible for 70 percent of DHL's global flying, and as a result, DHL has had an outsized, and potentially even illegal influence over the airlines, which rely heavily on the DHL business. And even as the German company brought in nearly \$3 billion in profits last year and paid its top executives millions, DHL is pressuring our carriers to provide service at rock-bottom rates.

This foreign influence is driving down wages and benefits and undermining standards set by American shipping companies such as UPS and FedEx. DHL's blatant disregard for the standards that have long defined America's piloting tradition has serious consequences. At one of our airlines, the pressure to meet the company's growing demands is so high that many of us are regularly forced to fly much longer hours than pilots at other U.S. carriers – putting us at risk of a level of fatigue that even the FAA warns is dangerous.

DHL is straining our operations. Faced with substandard pay and benefits, many long-time pilots at our carriers are leaving for better opportunities, while we struggle to recruit the staff needed to get the job done. These issues have gotten so bad that pilots at one of our carriers went on strike last year after more than a year of missing family events and doctor's appointments, including funerals, birthdays and anniversaries because of forced overtime shifts.

Now, DHL's model to squeeze U.S. pilots is spreading. Following the German company's lead, Amazon hired our airlines to service its new Prime Air delivery operation at the low standards set by DHL, rather than those set by UPS and FedEx, great U.S. companies that provide hundreds of thousands of good jobs for Americans.

It isn't just pilots and our families who are getting hurt. Despite overwhelming opposition from residents, pilots, and members of Congress, DHL abruptly shuttered its distribution hub in Wilmington, Ohio in 2008, leaving 8,000 people without jobs and devastating an entire community. One in every three households in the town of less than 13,000 was impacted by DHL's decision, upending the local economy.

And DHL's efforts to undermine our jobs and communities go even further: DHL is hiding behind a complex web of ties to our carriers and using its financial holdings to exert influence on the market, bypassing federal laws designed as a check against foreign control of our country's skies. At one of our airlines, DHL owns 49 percent of the company – the largest stake a foreign entity can have – while many of its other contracted carriers dedicate a substantial portion of their operations just to DHL. And in some cases, DHL even owns the planes that pilots fly and then leases them back to the carriers.

Millions of people have found hope in your promise to fight for American workers and especially your commitment to prevent unfair competition and the outsourcing of American jobs. This same fighting spirit can be found in our nation's cargo pilots. We are proudly fighting to protect our profession and our country by making sure U.S. standards for cargo shipping are upheld by foreign companies like German DHL. And we are doing our part to ensure that good, middle class jobs are not outsourced to foreign interests and replaced by exploited foreign workers – as in the case of the U.S merchant fleet, which was decimated when most of its ships moved to sail under cheaper, foreign "flags," leading to the loss of tens of thousands of good American jobs.

We hope you take this commitment to heart by joining us in calling on DHL to do right by American pilots and the country by telling the company to stop using its influence to drive down our job standards.

Sincerely,

The Pilots Flying for DHL