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Empty Proposals, Empty Promises: United's Latest Insult to Members

The Teamsters National Negotiating Committee for United Airlines returned to the table this week in Washington, D.C., only to face more of the same from the company — stalled progress and blatant disrespect toward the very people who keep this airline running.

After months of promising to return their scope and economics proposals, United finally passed them back — with barely any substantive changes. Holding these proposals for months only to return them nearly untouched is insulting to every member of the bargaining group waiting for a fair contract and shows the company's complete lack of commitment to bargaining seriously.

Clacy Griswold, Chair of the United Airlines National Negotiating Committee, sent a message to United leadership reminding them that in July, Senior Vice President of Tech Ops Planning and Strategy Kirk Limacher projected United would hire 800 to 1,000 Teamsters each year. "What you said is not going to happen if the economic proposals you keep passing don't change," Griswold told the company.

Throughout the week, subcommittee discussions continued on Articles 2, 12, and 17. Conversations also progressed on GSE issues, but this week's frustrations only increased when the two directors for GSE and Facilities who were supposed to attend failed to show up for the second negotiating session in a row. Their continued absence speaks volumes about the company's attitude toward this process.

"United is willing to pay their pilots industry-leading wages. They offer the flight attendants industry-leading wages," said Jasmine Johnson, a technician at Local 986 and member of the negotiating committee, "But when it comes to us, they won't give anything. They don't care and they don't take this work seriously."

The committee will not resort to using the same stall tactics as the company and offered constructive criticism to United leadership in an effort to move these talks forward. The feedback was heard and received, and the committee anticipates some positive progress during the next session of negotiations in September in Denver.