



# NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Affiliated with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers



## NFFE News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 28, 2018

Contact: Steve Lenkart

Phone: (202) 216-4458

### U.S. Air Traffic Control System to Remain Safe; Airlines Lose Bid to Oversight Themselves

**Washington, D.C.** – Today, the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) celebrated a victory against an effort to privatize the nation’s Air Traffic Control (ATC) system. The effort, led by several major airlines, proposed to remove the ATC system from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to a private entity largely controlled by the airlines themselves. The airline lobby claimed the move could save money and increase safety.

“This is a huge victory for air traffic safety and the traveling public,” stated Andi Parker, president of NFFE Local 1340 representing FAA employees. “Neither the science nor the data was there to show proof to claim that privatization will increase safety or save money. In fact, the evidence dictated the exact opposite. Now, with this ill-conceived burden being removed, our hardworking and dedicated professionals can focus on transitioning the National Airspace System (NAS) to a 21st Century Global Positioning based one.”

For years, several major airlines lobbied for ATC privatization under a coalition of airlines that spent millions of dollars influencing lawmakers, focusing hard on the leadership of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Experts from labor and the general aviation industry who lobbied against privatization successfully argued that the major airlines simply want to push more planes in the air without the interference of government oversight.

“Now that a wholesale attempt to privatize the FAA is off the table, we must remain vigilant against attempts to discredit the FAA through intentional underfunding and understaffing,” stated Randy Erwin, NFFE national president. “This is the next page in the privatization playbook, and it is the same playbook currently deployed in the effort to privatize the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Privatization proponents are happy to sacrifice air safety just like they have sacrificed veterans care. This is about money and control. Everything else is irrelevant.”

Erwin continued, “Not only did we save the jobs of dedicated FAA employees who keep the skies safe every day, we also protected the traveling public from an air traffic control system that would be subservient to the airline industry it is supposed to regulate. My deepest thanks to our FAA members and our coalition partners. This was a hard-fought and well-earned win.”

###

*Established in 1917, the National Federation of Federal Employees is the oldest union representing civil service federal employees. NFFE represents 110,000 federal employees in 35 departments and agencies government-wide. NFFE is affiliated with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, AFL-CIO. For more information, go to [www.nffe.org](http://www.nffe.org).*