

Good Morning. My name is Candace Bruton and I have been a Delta flight attendant for over 38 years, a fact of which I am extremely proud. Throughout my career I have had a world of experiences...my flying has ranged from domestic, to charters, to international, flying in both leader and non-leader positions. Like many of my colleagues, my career has included two mergers and one acquisition, resulting in the combination of distinct and varied cultures. I have also been an active employee advocate, serving as a member of various employee forums and groups and most recently as a member of the pre-merger Delta Flight Attendant Seniority Integration team. Over the years, whether I was advocating for employee issues or customer focused issues, I have found Delta to be respectful, supportive, and always open to dialog and debate. And while I may not have agreed with every decision, I have always found Delta to be fair in their decisions and, more importantly, fair in their decision making process.

In my career Delta flight attendants have had two opportunities to unionize: the concerted effort in 2002 by both AFA and TWU and more recently May of 2008 by AFA alone. In both elections the Delta flight attendants, by a wide margin, clearly answered no. Yet those who don't agree with the decision continue to attribute the last two election results to apathy, padded seniority lists, uneducated flight attendants and any number of other excuses being tossed around, to which I and all Delta f/as take great offense and find incredibly disrespectful. We are not uneducated or unaware. We knew exactly what we were doing.

A critical part of our integration is hearing from the combined group as a whole on the question of representation. Both Delta and Northwest flight attendants are ready to make their choice – we've been ready as we watch our co-workers in other departments within the company resolve this issue and work together. They are now working under the same pay rates, they have a single seniority list and they're able to bid on jobs throughout the company. All the while, we flight attendants are being held back by continued delays. These delays that we have had to endure have been frustrating to all and are keeping tension alive.

We want to know what our place on the seniority list is going to be – and we could have had that figured out by now. That valuable information lets us know if we can move to another base or fly certain trips – all things that impact my paycheck, my work environment and life outside of work.

But instead, there continues to be delay.

In the beginning, the AFA said it wasn't time because they needed to further educate Delta flight attendants - though we had just had the previous 2 years of education when they tried to organize us in 2007 and 2008. Next, the AFA determined they should delay a vote until a more favorable board was put into place. And finally, after submitting a request for single carrier status to the NMB, AFA has withdrawn the request in hopes to take advantage of a change in the voting process.

These delays have done *nothing* to promote the efforts to move forward as one flight attendant group, have done *nothing* to promote the combining of two proud cultures, have done *nothing* to settle the anxiety surrounding the future of the new Delta flight attendant population.

While you can probably tell that I am not a proponent of having a union here at Delta, I am even less interested in a union representing me that only has support from a minority of my co-workers. A union that holds only minority support cannot possibly function to its potential...it will cause instability within the combined group and most certainly, without the support of the majority, the group will experience an imbalance of power in contract negotiations.

The AFA has said as much in a mobilization training document that is circulating around on the Internet. In this document, the AFA says "A Union's power at any point in time is nothing more than the total energy and support of its members who can be mobilized." Without the majority supporting them, what kind of power could they have? Chaos is a trademark of the AFA's strategy. How effective would it be when only a small percentage agree to it...Or even the right to strike - with only minority support the threat of strike is immensely weakened.

The combined pre-merger Delta and pre-merger Northwest flight attendant group is the largest flight attendant group in the world. The potential for success with minority support is limited at best. And as such, the impact on the success of other unions assured. The current voting process, on the other hand, ensures that you are doing the will of the majority of the population. By changing this process, you lose the guarantee and security that the majority believe they are doing the right thing...and the results are left open to debate and criticism.

My thought process is not new. This issue has been being debated for over 70 years. Yet even with all the previous discussions, all the intellect of some very thoughtful and skilled individuals on both sides of the argument, and all the various intentions and interpretations of the voting process, the majority vote was put into place and upheld by the NMB several times over.

I would also echo my colleague Ed's comments about decertification. The proposed voting process, while allowing a minority to determine the outcome, does not include a balance to the equation....a decertification process.

There are many flight attendants at Delta who have worked at unionized carriers. Some of those flight attendants came to Delta to experience a new working environment. They say that the driving factor in their decision to give up seniority at another airline and to work for Delta is the fact that we are non-union. And while we're not perfect, they've liked what they've seen. If this Board is going to change the rules, it is only fair and democratic to give us the choice to get rid of the union if and when we choose to do so. And, to do this with a process that consists of a simple yes/no ballot with a majority of ballots cast determining whether the union stays or goes.

Ultimately, it is time to move on. We have been in the process of merging for over a year. Delta flight attendants need to begin the work of creating the best airline in the industry together.

It is good for the company and good for flight attendants ourselves. We need to know what our futures will hold, what aircraft we will be able to fly, what destinations we will be able to experience, where we will be based. We need to fly together, learn about each other, and join our two histories so we can produce a great future.

We are ready. Please stop the delays and the politics, and let us make our choice.

Thank you for your time.