

# Union protests force feds to yank plan to allow knives on planes

WASHINGTON, D.C. (PAI) — Union protests, led by the Association of Flight Attendants, forced the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) on April 24 to yank its plan to let airplane passengers bring small knives aboard planes.

Now AFA, an affiliate of Communications Workers of America (CWA) and its allies — Teamsters, Machinists, the Transport Workers, and Air Line Pilots — want to make sure the ban is permanent.

TSA won't admit that yet: It said it mishandled the rollout of the knife plan.

TSA Administrator John Pistole unveiled his knife plan on March 5. He also would allow small baseball bats onto planes. Terrorists and hijackers can use both knives and bats as weapons to overwhelm flight crews and take over planes, as the al-Qaeda terrorists used box cutters to commandeer planes on Sept. 11, 2001, the unions said.

"In order to accommodate further input from the Aviation Security Advisory Committee, which includes representatives from the aviation community, passenger advocates, law enforcement experts, and other stakeholders, TSA will temporarily delay implementation of changes to the prohibited items list, originally scheduled to go into effect April 25," Pistole said

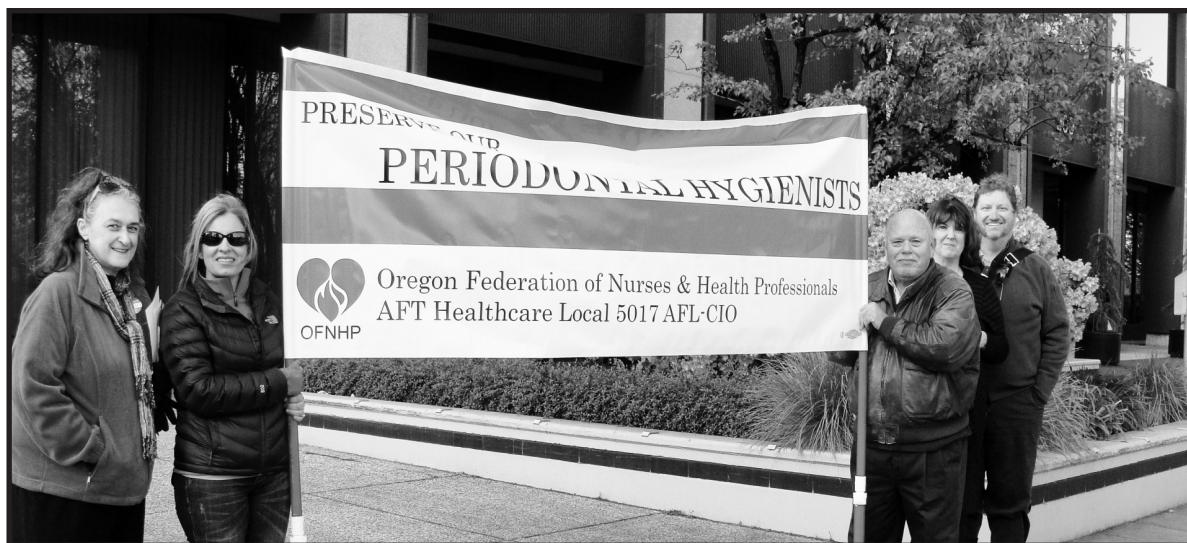
in a memo to his staff.

"In the face of a huge backlash from Flight Attendants, nearly every other stakeholder in aviation and the public, TSA postponed its plan to allow knives on U.S. flights," AFA said. "But the 90,000-member Flight Attendants Union Coalition, which opposed the ill-advised plan from the start, remains resolute: No knives on planes ever again.

"The United States has banned all knives from commercial flights since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks for good reason: Knives were the terrorists' weapons of choice in bringing down four jetliners and murdering thousands of Americans. All knives should be banned from planes permanently," the unions added.

If Pistole wants to enact "this drastic departure" in policy, he should try to do it the legal way, by putting his proposal out for public comment and reaction, which he did not, the coalition stated. If he did that, the coalition predicted, public reaction would reject it.

The coalition also garnered support against letting knives on planes from other unions, such as the Steelworkers, from passenger groups and from dozens of lawmakers. Rep. Edward Markey (D-Mass) and Sen. Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) both said they would introduce legislation overturning Pistole's plan unless he withdrew it.



## Kaiser dental hygienists protest

Dental hygienists at Kaiser Permanente demonstrated in front of Kaiser's headquarters in Northeast Portland April 24 to protest the health care provider's move to eliminate the periodontal hygienist classification within its dental system. Periodontal hygienists do specialized work in conjunction with periodontists to provide treatment of advanced gum disease. Twenty periodontal hygienists — in a bargaining unit of 140 registered dental hygienists — are members of the Oregon Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals Healthcare Local 5017. The union filed a grievance claiming the action violates their collective bargaining agreement. The dispute has gone to binding arbitration. A date has not been set. "It is extremely disappointing that Kaiser has recently promoted Dr. (Kenneth) Wright to the vice president of Dental Services, while at the same time he is eliminating an entire classification of specialized care, which will clearly impact the quality of care that Kaiser Dental has historically provided," said Local 5017 Executive Director Edward Burke. The union pointed to Kaiser's own statistics showing the region's dental membership has increased from 190,000 in 2011 to 205,000 in 2013. "This growth is based on the excellent and focused care each patient receives," Burke said. The union said it plans to conduct more demonstrations at various dental clinics throughout the region on a random and unannounced basis. In the photo above from left to right, registered dental hygienists Jackie Farlinger-King and Kay Fun hold the union's banner along with Local 5017 organizers Jeff Carr and Sharon Culley, and Executive Director Burke.

## Sizemore files bankruptcy to skirt paying unions

Perennial union foe Bill Sizemore filed bankruptcy April 9, listing assets of \$10,796 and debts of \$21 million — most of it to the Oregon Education Association (OEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) in a set of court cases that have been under way

since 2000.

In 2002, a Multnomah County Circuit Court jury found that two groups controlled by Sizemore engaged in a pattern of racketeering, having used fraud and forgery to place two anti-union measures on the 2000 ballot. A judge ordered the groups to pay \$2.5 million in damages to the unions, and later found Sizemore personally liable. The amount was later reduced on appeal.

In 2009, OEA and AFT filed a new

lawsuit seeking \$18 million in damages, charging that Sizemore and his longtime funder, Nevada millionaire Loren Parks, hid and misused money funneled through Sizemore's new group to qualify a new set of 2008 ballot measures, all of which failed at the polls.

Sizemore told the Oregonian that his bankruptcy filing was part of a strategy to avoid potential debts from the unions' lawsuits.

"Hopefully I can draw a line and make this go away," Sizemore told reporter Jeff Mapes.

Sizemore declared bankruptcy once before: In 1987 a court discharged \$358,000 when he liquidated his carpet business. At the time of his 1998 run for governor, he also had about \$795,000 in debt for a defunct toy business, most of it owed to members of his church and softball league who had loaned him money.

But a person whose debts are the result of fraud can have a hard time qualifying for bankruptcy protection, Oregon AFSCME attorney Jennifer Chapman said.

In 2011, Sizemore pled guilty to three felony charges of tax evasion and spent 18 days in Marion County Jail. He previously spent a night in Multnomah County Jail in 2008 for contempt of court, after he refused a judge's repeated orders to file tax forms for a group he set up.

In the current bankruptcy filing, he also listed \$10,500 owed to the Oregon Department of Revenue and \$41,000 to the IRS.



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