

# O'Hare Workers to Strike on Nationwide 'Day of Disruption'

Along with O'Hare workers, thousands of fast-food workers plan to walk off their jobs Nov. 29

By **CARLA K. JOHNSON**  
*Associated Press*

CHICAGO — A strike by hourly workers at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago will add another dimension to a nationwide day of protests by fast-food employees who have been pushing for a \$15 hourly wage and union rights,

were jobs you could live off of. Now airport jobs are just like fast-food jobs. We're all standing together."

The Service Employees International Union announced Monday that hundreds of workers will strike that day at O'Hare, one of the nation's busiest airports. The union has helped fund and staff

whether the strike will last longer than one day.

The Chicago Department of Aviation said it doesn't anticipate any disruption in service.

Some holiday travelers are nervous, however. Kim Maguire, 40, of Crystal Lake, was at O'Hare on Monday with her 3-year-old daughter and husband as they

“Four decades ago, airport jobs were jobs you could live off of. Now airport jobs are just like fast-food jobs. We're all standing together

organizers said Monday.

Thousands of workers plan to walk off the job at McDonald's restaurants and other fast-food spots in more than 340 cities on Nov. 29, organizers said in a news release. The planned "Day of Disruption" will mark the fourth anniversary of the first protests at McDonald's restaurants in New York.

The attention-grabbing airport strike is "going to cause complete disruption in travel plans for the day and maybe days to come," said Kendall Fells, national organizing director of the Fight for \$15 campaign. "Four decades ago, airport jobs

the Fight for \$15 campaign.

O'Hare is the only airport where workers plan to strike, though organizers are planning protests at airports in 18 other cities, including Boston, Washington, D.C., Denver, Atlanta, Seattle and Los Angeles.

About 500 O'Hare workers committed to a strike after a vote last week. They are trying to organize with SEIU Local 1's help. They work for private contractors at the airport and include baggage handlers, cabin cleaners, janitors and wheelchair attendants. Organizers said it will be up to workers to decide

headed out for a holiday trip to see relatives in Seattle, with a return flight scheduled on the strike date.

"I don't want it to impact our travel plans," Maguire said. "Especially traveling with a 3-year-old, delays would be difficult."

Maguire said she supports the workers and is grateful to those who clean planes, especially reaching into seat-back pockets. "I wouldn't want to reach my hand in there," she said.

Julio Godoy, 54, an O'Hare airplane cabin cleaner who makes \$10.50 an hour, said he plans to take part in the



In this Sunday, Nov. 29, 2015, file photo, travelers line up at a security checkpoint area in Terminal 3 at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago. Hundreds of O'Hare International Airport workers that are trying to unionize have voted to go on strike ahead of the 2016 Thanksgiving holiday. Officials with the Service Employees International Union Local 1 said Thursday Nov. 17, 2016, that about 500 workers have committed to strike.

strike. He said he knows co-workers who have been stuck by the needles of syringes left in seat-back pockets and who then needed to be tested for HIV and hepatitis. He said he's also concerned about being asked to check planes for weapons and explosives without training.

There had been concern that the strike would fall during the busiest travel days. In announcing the Nov. 29 strike, the union and workers on Monday portrayed the date as a concession to families.

"O'Hare airport workers often can't afford a proper Thanksgiving

dinner and know what it's like to miss Thanksgiving with our families," said baggage handler Raquel Brito, who announced the strike date. "However we respect families traveling to be together and that is why we're holding off our strike until after the Thanksgiving holiday."

## Retirement cont'd from pg 8

why access to 401(k) and other retirement plans is so important.

Most lower-income households will save when they have access to a retirement plan.

Research at Boston College.

"For an upper-middle class person, not being able to maintain their standard of living means fewer trips," says Alicia

meantime, many workers are simply working longer.

David Tucker is 74 and still waking at 1:15 each morning to get to his job as a skycap at Reagan Na-

“I have to work and pray and hope my health continues to remain good so that I can continue to work. I still have a mortgage and all the insurance that goes along with that, and I have to pay payroll for my employees, which is really important to me. I can honestly say I'm frightened about the future'

The problem is that most don't get the opportunity.

Eighty percent of high-income working households have access to a 401(k) or similar defined-contribution plan, according to the U.S. Government Accountability Office. For low-income working households, it's just 35 percent.

The low retirement balances mean the majority of households — 52 percent — are at risk of having to cut their spending by more than 10 percent after entering retirement, according to the Center for Retirement

Munnell, the center's director. "But for lower-income people, it can really mean depriving themselves."

### POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

To help close the gap, states are trying their own measures. California recently passed a law requiring employers to automatically enroll their workers in a state-run program and deduct money from each paycheck.

Experts prefer a broader fix from the federal government but call the state programs an encouraging step. In the

tional Airport outside Washington, D.C.

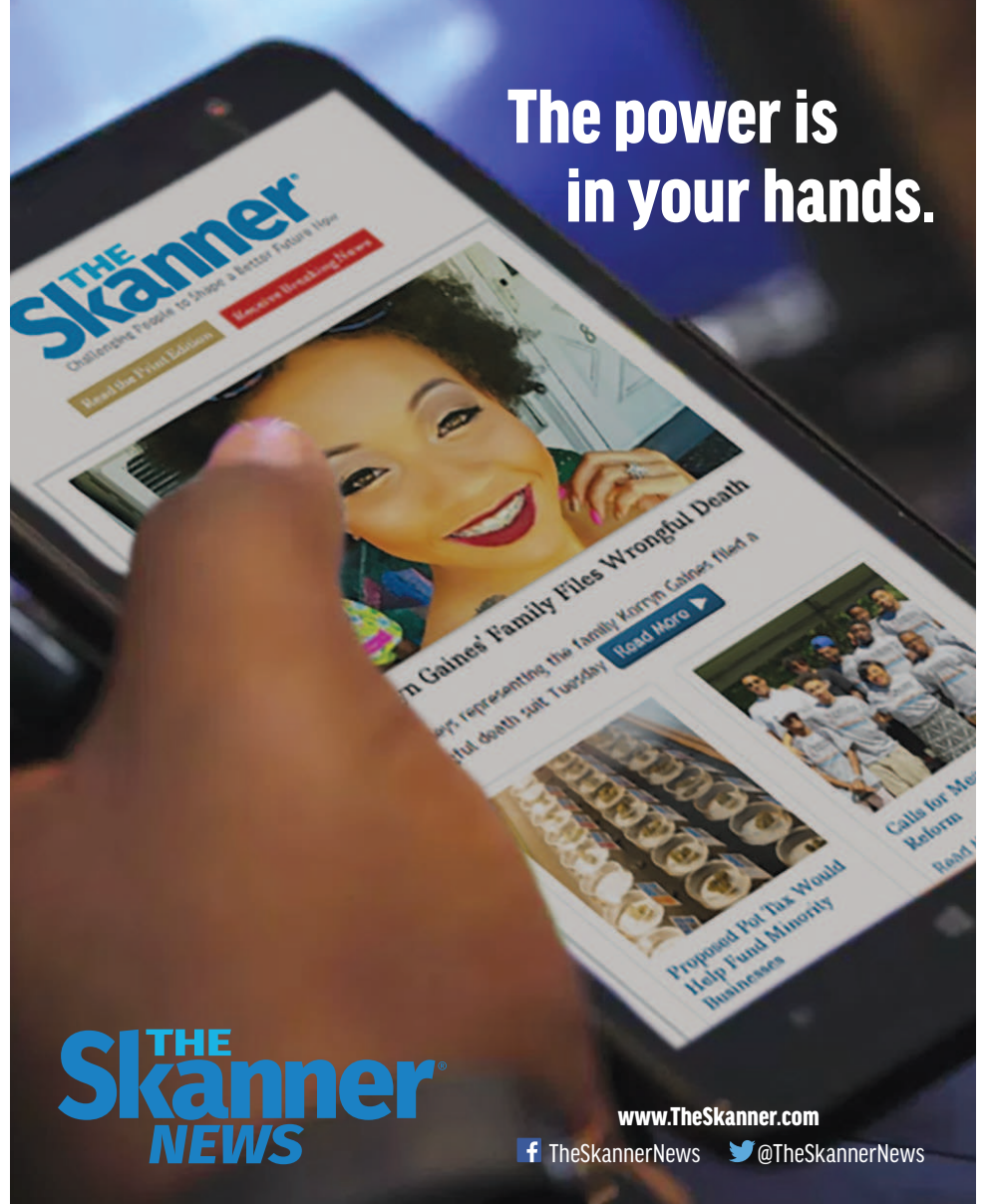
He says he may consider retiring next year or cutting down to a few days per week. And what would he look forward to in retirement?

"I would like to feel what it's like to wake up and not go to work," he says. "For a while, that's all I would like to do. I wouldn't worry about anything else."

AP Data Journalist Angeliki Kastanis and AP Business Writers Joseph Pisani and Sarah Skidmore Sell contributed to this report.

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