



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Southwest Airlines' Four Largest Unions Join Together in Demand for New Leadership**

(DALLAS) – Boards of directors from the four largest unions at Southwest Airlines, representing nearly 38,000 of SWA's approximately 50,000 employees, all completed votes of "no confidence" in the CEO and COO of the airline. The representative organizations include the flight attendants (TWU 556), mechanics (AMFA), pilots (SWAPA), and Ground Operations (TWU 555) employees.

All four groups, representing nearly 80 percent of the company's workforce, are frontline employees affected directly by the operational decisions of management and are the "face" of the company to customers. These are the same employees who worked directly with customers to help minimize the trauma when the operation failed on a grand scale last month. They are frustrated with the operational failures that are impacting customers and jeopardizing the long-term success of the company. While three of these unions are several years into contract negotiations, this collective includes a union who is not in negotiations, and speaks to the fact that this issue transcends contracts. The majority of the employees of Southwest Airlines believe that their airline has been moving in an unhealthy and unsustainable direction, and they demand a course correction.

"Gone are the days of Herb Kelleher and Colleen Barrett who built a company that believed in taking care of their employees first," said TWU 555 president, Greg Puriski. "Those days have been, sadly, replaced by a focus on the bottom line. After witnessing the recent electronic meltdown that left customers and flight crews stranded in airports, our members trying to pick up the pieces of delayed and cancelled flights, we will no longer remain silent but join with SWAPA, AMFA and TWU 556 in declaring our vote of 'No Confidence'."

"Over the past several years, Southwest Airlines CEO Gary Kelly and COO Mike Van de Ven have failed to recognize and adequately fix the operational failures that continue to plague our airline," said TWU Local 556 President Audrey Stone. "Our Flight Attendants, along with other front-line employees, end up bearing the brunt of these failures. Management's failures continue to erode the morale of employees, endangering the famous culture upon which our beloved airline was founded."

"It has been one leadership failure after another, culminating in the most recent colossal breakdown affecting the operation and flying public," said Louie Key, National Director of the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA). "As employees, shareholders, and guardians of aircraft safety, we are

concerned that a 'profit over people' mentality has overtaken the core values that Southwest Airlines was built on. We are in agreement with our fellow labor unions that it's time for a change."

"This is about more than just one failure in the operation or a contract," said Captain Jon Weaks, president of the Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association. "This is about the reputation of the company we love. After years of operational failures and a degradation of our culture that risks slowly eroding our loyal customer base, we must speak up and be catalysts for change. We are faithful to our company and its founding principles, and we feel that our CEO and COO have broken the faith with both."

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The Southwest Airlines Pilots' Association represents more than 8,300 pilots. Transport Workers Union 556 represents more than 14,500 flight attendants. Transport Workers Union Local 555 represents more than 11,500 ramp, operations, provisioning and freight agents. Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association represents more than 2,600 Southwest Airlines technicians.

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