



## *Updates from Airport Workers United*

### **Aviation Worker Perspectives for Investors**

Airport workers across the nation are calling on American Airlines and investors to take urgent action to protect their health and safety in the face of rising temperatures. See below for action items.

#### ***Airport Workers Demand Airlines Take Responsibility for Basic Heat Protection & Safe Workplaces***

APRIL VERRETT  
International President

ROCIO SÁENZ  
International Secretary-Treasurer

NEAL BISNO  
Executive Vice President

JOSEPH BRYANT  
Executive Vice President

HEATHER CONROY  
Executive Vice President

LESLIE FRANE  
Executive Vice President

Amid record-high summer temperatures, airport service workers employed by airline service providers, who airlines depend on to clean airplane cabins, handle baggage and transport passengers in wheelchairs, are demanding airlines take responsibility for their contracted service providers and ensure safe working conditions during extreme heat. Workers from across the country have been taking bold action, including leading a nationwide “Heat Week” action to raise the alarm on the dangerous heat conditions they face on the job while servicing the airlines and helping to keep planes flying and passengers safe.

On Monday, August 12, [SEIU President April Verrett joined a zoom call to kick off "Heat Week"](#) that featured U.S. Representative Greg Casar (TX-35), and workers from various industries, including Cecilia Ortiz, a former wheelchair agent from Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport.

“It should not take workers getting sick or dying for employers to act. This week, airport workers will fan out from coast to coast, and tell airline executives they will not die on the job,” said SEIU President April Verrett.

On Tuesday, August 13, [airport service workers at Dallas Fort Worth International Airport rallied outside of American Airlines Headquarters](#) at Fort Worth and delivered a letter to the CEO Robert Isom. Despite workers calling for the airline to address the heat issues, none of the executives came to meet them, and they refused to accept the letter.

"We're at American Airlines HQ today, and AA executives are refusing to come outside to speak with us regarding excessive heat and dangerous heat conditions." said Joy, Baggage Services Agent employed by an airline service provider servicing American Airlines.<sup>1</sup>

Joy also pointed out that "Some workers report being too afraid to even take a short break when they feel the signs of heat illness because they are afraid to be disciplined."<sup>2</sup>

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Elsewhere on Tuesday, [airport service workers at American Airlines' hub airport, Charlotte Douglas International Airport, spoke out alongside local clergy](#), together demanding that airlines and their service providers protect workers against extreme heat on the job, end poverty wages across the system and respect workers' right to form a union. While [workers at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport rallied outside the airport with community allies](#), and attempted to deliver a copy of a recently passed heat mitigation ordinance to their employer demanding the company protect them from extreme heat.

APRIL VERRETT  
International President

On September 14, at the White House Summit on Extreme Heat, Cecilia Ortiz shared her experience once again, stating, "One thing I've learned is that the major airlines and corporations aren't going to take the steps to protect the working people they depend on. So we have to take those steps for ourselves."<sup>3</sup>

ROCIO SÁENZ  
International Secretary-Treasurer

### ***Implications for Investors***

NEAL BISNO  
Executive Vice President

Airlines' failure to respond to the letter delivered to the CEO about extreme heat and working conditions, and failure to respond about how they are holding their service providers accountable has implications for worker well-being, air travel safety and industry productivity. Research has linked rising temperatures to worker health and safety, which in turn affects productivity across multiple industries.<sup>4</sup> This is a risk factor that American Airlines itself has acknowledged in its climate reporting.<sup>5</sup>

JOSEPH BRYANT  
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Despite American Airlines' stated commitment to ensure safe working conditions and human rights<sup>6</sup> along its supply chain, its apparent failure to ensure that its service providers protect service workers from climate-related risks like extreme heat at key hubs has the potential of exposing the airline to reputational damage and potential financial losses. The airline's actions—or lack thereof—could result in negative financial outcomes for shareholders if the company does not take action to respond to these critical issues.<sup>7</sup>

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As climate change intensifies, the airline industry's significant contribution to global warming through substantial carbon emissions remains a growing concern. The aviation industry is responsible for 3.5% of the factors contributing to climate change.<sup>8</sup> Despite American Airlines' claims of moving towards net-zero emissions, the airline and its associated trade groups actively lobby against climate change initiatives, and the company has diverged from several of its commitments regarding GHG emissions reduction, sustainable aviation fuel, and similar climate measures.<sup>9</sup>

The misalignment between American Airlines' public image and its practices deserves investor scrutiny. For more detailed information on the climate-related

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risks associated with the misalignment of American Airlines' ESG policy, please see the [full report online](#) or scan the QR code at the bottom of this email.

### ***Workers Demand***

The majority Black, brown and immigrant airport service workforce, which helps the major airlines make profits, is often among the lowest paid workers at the airport, with wages that have barely budged in 20 years. That means airport service workers may not be able afford to cool their homes or miss a day of work to recover from heat exhaustion without significant economic risk.

On top of that, many airport workers lack paid sick days and affordable healthcare.<sup>10</sup>

To promote long-term sustainable business practices, airport service workers urge investors to encourage American Airlines to:

- Respect workers' right to form a union;
- End poverty wage for all workers that service the airline, including ensuring that contracts with service providers are able to support a living wage, employer provided healthcare and paid time off;
- Ensure every worker servicing the airline has basic protections from dangerous heat -- including ensuring that airline service contractors provide easy access to cool water, a cool place to take a break whenever needed and jobsite training on heat safety;
- Mitigate risks to workers -- including contracted service workers - through better alignment of company practices with stated climate goals.

**Investors who are concerned about these issues can contact the airline directly and ask the airline to respond to the issue at the upcoming earnings call.**

Airport workers would welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues in further detail with investors.

For further information: see the photos and clips below. Feel free to contact us at: [april.li@seiu.org](mailto:april.li@seiu.org) or [conor.hanlon@seiu.org](mailto:conor.hanlon@seiu.org)

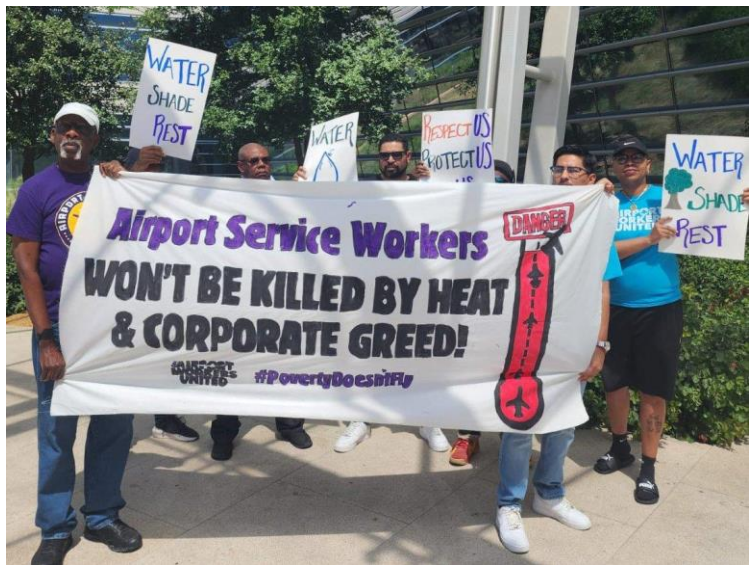
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### ***Photos from the Heat Week Action***

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Airport Service Workers Rallied at American Airlines' Headquarters in Fort Worth, Texas.



Airport Service Workers Rallied at Charlotte Douglas International Airport

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Airport Service Workers Rallied at Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport.

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**Press Coverages**

Here are some of the top press hits covering all the actions:

[The Guardian](#): US workers launch Heat Week to fight for 'the right to water, shade and rest'

[Phoenix New Times](#): 'Can't ignore it anymore': Sky Harbor workers demand more heat relief

[Business Insider](#): Airport, farm, and fast-food workers rally for better heat protections

[The Charlotte Post](#): Charlotte airport workers urge cool for the hottest jobs

[Grist](#): Workers across the US rally after string of heat-related deaths

**Social Media**

Check out this [X thread](#) covering the zoom call with President April Verrett

Check out this [X thread](#) covering the PHX action

Check out this [X thread](#) covering the CLT action

Check out this [X thread](#) covering the DFW action

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**About Airport Workers United**

Airport Workers United brings together 42,500 airport service workers at more than 46 airports across the country. Our movement began in 1999 when security officers and janitors from LAX and SFO stood together to demand better wages. Since then, over 150,000 airport workers have won raises and other improvements. Nearly 146,000 of those have won a path to \$15 an hour.

We are fighting to ensure everyone that works at an airport, no matter your race, background or role, has jobs that pay a living wage, provide affordable health care and ensure a voice on the job.

**Scan the QR Code Below to Read the Full Report on American Airlines' ESG Misalignment**



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## Endnotes:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://x.com/GoodAirports/status/1823824055293927710>

<sup>2</sup> <https://x.com/GoodAirports/status/1823817790052307249>

<sup>3</sup> About the WH Summit, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/09/14/readout-of-first-ever-white-house-summit-on-extreme-heat/>,

<sup>4</sup> The Effects of Temperature on Labor Productivity, Wangyang Lai, Yun Qiu, Qu Tang, Chen Xi, and Peng Zhang, May 20, 2023, <https://www.annualreviews.org/content/journals/10.1146/annurev-resource-101222-125630>

<sup>5</sup> American Airlines Sustainability Report, 2022, available at <https://s202.q4cdn.com/986123435/files/images/esg/aa-sustainability-report-2022.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.aa.com/i18n/customer-service/about-us/human-rights-statement.jsp#:~:text=We%20are%20committed%20to%20providing,Stakeholder%20Engagement>

<sup>7</sup> American Airlines Sustainability Report, 2022, available at <https://s202.q4cdn.com/986123435/files/images/esg/aa-sustainability-report-2022.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Aviation is responsible for 3.5 percent of climate change, study finds, NOAA Research, September, 2020, <https://research.noaa.gov/2020/09/03/aviation-is-responsible-for-35-percent-of-climate-change-study-finds/>

<sup>9</sup> Risk: American Airlines' Environmental and Lobbying Misalignment Could Impact Shareholders, Workers, and the Environment, SEIU, April 2024, <https://seiu.org/docs/Risk-AmericanAirlinesApril2024.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Legalized Heat talking points provided by Laura at [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1X-NFmMC9EinHAFS0DfuJj6mAXvQllgEbDd9cO4C\\_vQE/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1X-NFmMC9EinHAFS0DfuJj6mAXvQllgEbDd9cO4C_vQE/edit)