

We need the

**Employee
FREE
CHOICE ACT
NOW!**

'If Our First Vote Was a Mockery this Last Election At Delta Was a Circus'

My name is Emily Ceshker and I came to Delta during the Pan American Airlines acquisition in early 1990s. At Pan Am, I had a union. At Delta, I didn't, and I still don't.

Knowing the importance of a contract, I immediately made contact with AFA-CWA and started my lonely one-person campaign with an AFA-CWA representative. We traveled from city to city where flight attendants were based until little by little we became the group that we are today.

When we finally went to vote for the first time — an election by mail — we were confronted with the antiquated rule set by the National Mediation Board that stipulates that ballots that were not returned would be considered a "no" vote. Can you imagine this rule applying to state or city elections for bond issues, property taxes or other yes-or-no ballot questions? Voters who didn't show up would be counted as voting "no." You'd never get a school built, a bridge repaired or anything else done.

Taking full advantage of such a ridiculous rule, Delta's list of employees

included scores of outdated addresses — homes where flight attendants no longer lived and homes of retired flight attendants. We worked with AFA to try to catch all of the bad addresses, but we couldn't get them all.

We lost the election but — just like our second election in 2008 — we would have won if the rules weren't twisted in Delta's favor. If our first vote was a mockery this last election at Delta was a circus.

We had all the same problems with addresses and we sent the Mediation Board proof after proof that Delta was acting illegally. But the pro-employer NMB did nothing. Even though Delta managed to send its anti-union propaganda to correct addresses, when we sent out a sample ballot — just like those published in the newspaper before government elections — the Board told us we had to stop. How is that fair?

We are the ones, the workers, who are always taking cuts to save our companies while our CEOs continue with their multimillion-dollar paychecks, giant pensions and golden parachutes.

Every one of them negotiated a contract for their fat salaries and benefits. When workers ask for the same right, to negotiate a contract to protect us, all we get is disrespect.

With the new administration, we pray that things will change at the National Mediation Board. We say that Third World countries have illegal votes. But it turns out you don't have to travel far to see it: It's hap-

pening right in front of our eyes.

Most important, Congress has to pass the Employee Free Choice Act. We, the employees, the hard-working Americans who made our companies what they are today, deserve the right to freely organize for representation without management interference.



Emily Ceshker