



TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION LOCAL 555

REPRESENTING THE RAMP, OPERATIONS, PROVISIONING, AND FREIGHT AGENTS OF SOUTHWEST AIRLINES
TWU555.ORG • 1341 W MOCKINGBIRD LANE STE 1050E DALLAS, TX 75247 • 1.800.595.7672

November 7, 2025

Brothers and Sisters,

We are outraged and deeply disturbed by the Oakland City Council's sudden, unexplained decision to kill its own lawsuit against Southwest Airlines, litigation that was brought to enforce basic paid sick leave rights that workers in Oakland voted for and are legally entitled to receive.

After seven years of worker complaints, investigations, and documented violations, including allegations that the Company zeroed out earned sick leave, failed to provide legally required accrual, and retaliated against workers who attempted to use their earned time, the Council chose to quietly dismiss the case without settlement, without transparency, and without a single public-facing justification.

The Oakland City Council's own statements paint an alarming picture. Councilmember Ken Houston, who made the motion to dismiss, justified ending the lawsuit not because the Company complied with the law, not because workers were made whole, but because, in his words:

"This has been going on too long... Enough is enough, I'm done, I'm tired."

Our Members across Oakland, and across Southwest stations nationwide, know exactly what it feels like to be "tired." Tired from forced overtime. Tired from understaffing. But we do not get to walk away from our job duties because we are "tired." Elected leaders shouldn't either.

Houston further stated he intends to meet with the Company to:

"break bread with them."

Working families are not served by backroom meals and deals. They are served by enforcing the laws voters approved.

Councilmember Charlene Wang said the quiet part out loud:

"For me, it wasn't about the merits of the suit."

"Unfortunately, our Southwest inbound traffic has taken a significant hit,"

"Is it better to have a flawed employer or no employer?"

Those sentences alone should alarm every worker in Oakland.

We reject the false choice between worker rights and economic survival. A city government choosing to protect a corporation because it might leave is not leadership, it is surrender.

We already subsidize the Company with our labor. We should not be asked to subsidize it further by waiving compliance with basic sick leave law.



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To dismiss such a case without settlement and with such contradictory explanations from Councilmembers undermines public trust, worker rights, and the integrity of Oakland's own voter-approved labor laws.

Let me be crystal clear:

- When a city sues a corporation over repeated labor violations...
- And workers come forward for years with documented concerns...
- And the City Attorney states they expected to pursue the case...
- And the Council dismisses it in closed session...
- And Councilmembers justify the dismissal by citing corporate flight patterns, fatigue, and a desire to "break bread"...

It unmistakably creates the appearance that political convenience was chosen over worker protection. I'll say what workers across Oakland are already thinking: This decision looks like abandonment. And it looks like appeasement.

Our Members deserve better.

We will not allow this dismissal to bury the truth or silence our Members who came forward. Oakland's sick leave ordinance exists because voters demanded it, our Members relied on it.

We are watching.

We are organized.

And we are not going away.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Slavings'.

Tony Slavings

President

Transport Workers Union Local 555

Sources:

[Oakland City Council kills lawsuit against Southwest Airlines](#)

[Closed Session Report Of Final Action](#)

[City of Oakland v. Southwest Airlines Co.](#)

[Office of the City Attorney City of Oakland Frequently Asked Questions](#)