

Chair Cassidy, Ranking Member Sanders, and Members of the Committee, thank you for providing me the opportunity to testify today. My name is Joshua Arnold. I was born and raised in the Spanish Lake neighborhood of St Louis, Missouri. I am a husband and a father of two. I work as a Support Coordinator on the FA-18 SLM Program at Boeing Defense St. Louis, where I have worked for 11 years.

Like many of my coworkers at Boeing, I began honing my skills as a proud member of the Armed Services, myself serving the U.S. Army in Iraq as a 63W all wheeled vehicle mechanic.

I, along with 3,200 other highly skilled members of IAM Union Local 837 working at Boeing in Missouri and Illinois, have dedicated our lives to manufacturing the highest quality military aircraft known to man. For generations, IAM Union members in our shops have built military equipment that directly ensure U.S. service members have the tools needed to complete their missions safely and effectively. Together we produce world class military aircraft including the F-15 Eagle, F-18 Super Hornet, and MQ-25 Stingray. Most recently, our employer was awarded a multi-billion-dollar contract to produce the next generation of US air dominance, the F-47 fighter, and together we will proudly build this new aircraft helping ensure U.S. national security and global aerospace leadership well into the future.

For more than 50 years, our shop has been a union-represented workplace. Meaning for more than half a century, this workforce has negotiated a collective bargaining agreement, or CBA, with the company that spells out our wages and benefits, as well as workplace policies. Our contract with the company expires every three to five years, and we have the right and

responsibility to negotiate a new CBA with the company which respects the skill and dedication of this workforce. I also serve as Shop Steward for IAM Union Local 837B, where I help ensure all employees get the rights and benefits spelled out in that CBA.

Unfortunately, in our 2025 negotiations, Boeing has been unwilling to negotiate a contract which respects our world-class skill and dedication. Despite immense and growing profits, inflated executive compensation packages, and golden parachutes in excess of \$60 million, Boeing has been unwilling to put a suitable offer on the table for their workers. Boeing's offer was, and is, substandard. In the face of consistently increasing household costs, Boeing's offer would cause our families to continue to lose ground. Some in our shop are already working second jobs to make ends meet. Boeing's offer is in fact far lower than the offer recently extended to their workers in Washington State.

Granted, these are good jobs. But my co-workers and I are far from getting rich. At the very least, we should not be losing ground. We are not shooting for the moon here, but we believe we deserve more. Compared to our average salary of \$36 per hour, recent Boeing CEOs have been compensated by nearly 300 times what we're making.

We're also seeking improved employer contributions to our 401(k)-retirement plan. Several years ago, Boeing took away our defined benefit pension plan. In light of that, and out of respect for the hard work and sacrifice that we pour into our work, we are simply asking for a 401(k) match that equals the match they offer to their workers in Washington State, which of course is a drop in the bucket compared to the \$60 Million golden parachutes some Boeing executives have recently received.

In the face of Boeing's sub-standard offer, we the workers voted overwhelmingly to reject it. We urged the Company to improve their offer, but they declined. There are very few effective tools in U.S. labor law to help coax companies and corporations into doing the right thing. So, on August 4th we implemented one of the only tools we have. We voted to withhold our labor and strike until the company proposes an improved offer that respects our value. We had no other option. We are dealing with a company that has shown us just how little they value us. They have made it clear that they put their greed for skyrocketing profits over the people that actually earn them the profit in the first place.

We're now entering the 12th week of our strike. Despite our efforts, the Company has not improved their offer one bit. In fact, they have backtracked and made it worse. We have now voted on, and overwhelmingly rejected, their offer three times. Still, company management refuses to come back to the table to negotiate in good faith an offer which respects our value. The wage and retirement improvements we are seeking would cost Boeing only half of the cost of one F-15 fighter jet over the next four years.

We have now missed 12 weeks of work -- that's 6 paychecks. The Company has cut off our healthcare insurance and halted our retirement savings contributions. The decision to strike is a hard one, and holding the line for this long is even harder. This strike has negatively impacted my family, as it has all of our members' families. Personally, my family and I have had to try to make ends meet on my wife's salary alone. We are more fortunate than many, as we still have one income, but many do not have that luxury. The threat of foreclosure, eviction, unpaid bills piling up, living without health insurance. There are very few families that can afford to pay

\$2,500 per month to continue their healthcare coverage through COBRA. Like many states across the nation, in Missouri there are no provisions to provide unemployment benefits or affordable healthcare to striking workers. Financial stress and misfortune is a reality for all of these 3,200 working families.

As if that wasn't bad enough, we have been forced to endure constant ultimatums from the company: take their offer "or else." Boeing continuously threatens to permanently replace us with non-union workers or move our work to other locations out of state. We are proud of the programs we work on, and we are concerned about the quality of our products and timeliness of deliveries. It takes more than six months of training to certify a worker on these aircraft, and it takes a lot longer to become a trusted journeyman capable of completing the complex processes involved in manufacturing military grade aircraft. Again, we are concerned about quality and safety if these replacement workers are brought in to do our work.

The chips are undoubtedly stacked against workers in favor of corporations. We took this action together because this is the tool we have, and we truly believe the Company's offer does not respect our skill and dedication. We stand ready to return to the table to negotiate an improved offer which respects our value as highly skilled aircraft production workers.

I again thank you all for the opportunity to testify today and I look forward to answering any of your questions.