

Congressional Delegation Demands Answers On Proposed Pratt and Whitney Layoffs

Senators Chris Dodd and Joe Lieberman, and Connecticut's Congressional delegation joined together today to demand answers from Pratt & Whitney about their plans to cut hourly jobs at their Cheshire Engine Center.

August 31, 2010

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - Senators Chris Dodd and Joe Lieberman, and Connecticut's Congressional delegation joined together today to demand answers from Pratt & Whitney about their plans to cut hourly jobs at their Cheshire Engine Center.

The delegation is questioning the need for layoffs considering employees have been working 10 hours a day, two hours longer than the normal eight hour shift. And recently, some workers have also been asked to work on weekends to keep up with demand.

"Despite multiple attempts to help Pratt & Whitney avoid closing plants and laying off workers, United Technologies has again turned its back on Connecticut's talented and dedicated workforce," said Senator Dodd. "I will not give up the fight on behalf of Connecticut's workers, and strongly urge United Technologies to reconsider laying off the hard working men and women at the Cheshire Engine Center. I will continue to work with the rest of the delegation to protect Connecticut jobs and ensure our state's aerospace industry continues to be a national leader."

"I am disappointed in Pratt & Whitney's decision to move forward with these layoffs and firmly believe it is not in the best interest of our state. The talented men and women of the Cheshire Engine Center are a model of hard work and dedication, and I believe they deserve better," said Senator Lieberman.

"The hardworking men and women working at the Cheshire Engine Center have demonstrated their unmatched skill and commitment over the years, and the shop is clearly busting at the seams with work right now, so these threatened layoffs are unnecessary. Pratt's proposal defies logic, so it appears to me to be an attempt to better position them when the union contract is up for negotiation in a few months. I continue to stand with the workers - together, we won't give up this

fight," said Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5), who represents Cheshire.

"I sincerely hope we can get together and find a way to save these vital local jobs. Maintaining our highly-skilled workforce is important to the economic development of our communities and the future growth of our businesses. Laying off these workers is shortsighted and detrimental to our area," said Congressman John Larson (CT-1).

"I have fought to protect these jobs, speaking with union leaders and proposing a rotating furlough schedule as a potential solution to this situation. I am very disappointed that the leadership at Pratt & Whitney has decided not to pursue a compromise, and is continuing along the path of eliminating so many skilled worker positions. A common-sense resolution is what is needed now and in the future as we continue to navigate this difficult economy. I urge Pratt to reconsider their position, and I will continue working with my colleagues, the unions, and the company to reach a satisfactory result," said Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (CT-3).

"With employees already overextended, working repeated overtime and struggling to keep up with demand, Pratt's decision to lay off workers is troubling. This move has sweeping ramifications for jobs, families and our region, and Pratt should have a solid rationale for its decision. With our economic and national security in mind, cutting hourly jobs is too big a decision to make in a vacuum," said Congressman Joe Courtney (CT-2).

"Every job lost is a tragedy for a family and a problem for the state of Connecticut," said Congressman Jim Himes (CT-4). "Pratt & Whitney employees deserve to be treated fairly, and I urge the company to carefully consider any layoffs."

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