

# APALA

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN LABOR ALLIANCE, AFL-CIO



Worker, Immigrant, and Civil Rights

Founded in 1992

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## APALA Responds to Upsetting Removal of Airline Passenger

Washington, DC – The Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, AFL-CIO (APALA) is outraged by the unnecessary, forcible removal of a passenger on a United Express flight operated by Republic Airways by airport security officers that occurred last Sunday.

"Incidents like these are deeply upsetting," stated Johanna Puno Hester, APALA National President and Assistant Executive Director of the United Domestic Workers, AFSCME Local 3930. "It could have easily been resolved by peaceful means. No one deserves to be treated that way! It was a needless act of brutality yet again on a person of color."

APALA Executive Director Gregory Cendana added: "Resistance to 'authorities' of the carceral state does not justify violence against our bodies. This incident is another example in the larger narrative on how people of color are devalued, dehumanized, and criminalized in our society. We demand accountability for the officer's actions and will continue to put people over profit -- and in this case, the profit of the airline."

"We do not condone the actions of the officer involved. There are tens of thousands of amazing airline employees who provide excellent customer service, and the airline's policy failed them," continued Hester. "Even after public apologies, airlines should not only reform policies, like the overbooking practice, that can impact their workers' day to day interactions with passengers, but also represent their dedication to their workers properly throughout these processes."

Cendana concluded: "What is even more disturbing, however, is a growing police state emboldened to use force and violence. Airlines and airports are increasingly becoming places where brown and black communities feel more and more unsafe. We challenge these institutions to proactively address issues of discrimination and racism, and to denounce acts of violence that they may encounter in their workplaces."

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The **Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance** (APALA), AFL-CIO was founded in 1992 as the first and only national organization for Asian Pacific American union members to advance worker, immigrant and civil rights.

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