

Melissa Williams
Human Resources Director
Unifi Aviation Services
980 Virginia Ave., Fourth Floor
Atlanta, GA 30354

Dear Ms. Williams,

We are writing in support of Unifi's former employees contracted to work at the Missoula International Airport and their reasonable request to be compensated more fairly for the skilled, labor-intensive and sometimes dangerous work they perform. We were dismayed to learn that, rather than work with them to address their requests, Unifi chose to dismiss them from employment instead. This is especially disappointing in light of recent news reports confirming that Unifi pays employees working in other Montana communities a higher, more fair wage.

As a corporation based across the country, you may be removed from the impact your decisions have on the everyday residents of our county. As their elected representatives, we know first-hand the ramification of these decisions, and we also know what's possible when an organization prioritizes the economic well-being of their employees.

Missoula County, along with our partners at the City of Missoula, have worked over the past several years to raise our minimum entry-level wage to \$15 an hour to help ensure our employees can keep up with the increasing cost of living in our area. We know many factors impact what organizations are able to do, but we encourage all local employers to pursue whatever avenues possible to do what's best for their workers to ensure they earn livable wages, which will also ensure Missoula County can continue to attract a viable workforce in the coming years.

Approximately 85% of Missoula County's employees are members of collective bargaining units, and the county negotiates in good faith with each of them. This allows us to build strong, trusting relationships with our employees and lay the groundwork for positive resolution when differences do arise. These practices allow us to recruit and retain a talented, hard-working workforce to serve our constituents, and we encourage all employers in our area to pursue these best practices whenever possible.

While the county-appointed members of the airport authority oversee the operations of the airport, we understand it is the airlines' choice who they contract with to handle their baggage and provide other aviation services. We will encourage board members to work with their airline partners, the Federal Aviation Administration and others to make sure that those they enter into contract with are adequately compensating their employees for the work they do.

Sincerely,

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