

PUCHALA NOMINATED TO NATIONAL MEDIATION BOARD BY OBAMA

President Obama announces the selection of Linda A. Puchala, a former president of the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA), to fill a seat on the National Mediation Board (NMB) currently held by Chair Read Van de Water. The NMB oversees collective bargaining and representation under the Railway Labor Act, governing labor relations in the aviation and rail industries.

Puchala is currently an associate director of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) services with the NMB, where she has worked as a mediator on both airline and railroad cases since 1999. In her position, Puchala directs the board's ADR training programs, develops and maintains the training curriculum, and delivers training to interested parties. She also remains active as a mediator, and conducts facilitation and grievance mediation.

Puchala holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Cleary University in Howell, Michigan. Prior to joining the board's staff, she worked for more than 30 years in labor relations, including terms as president of the AFA, an affiliate of the Communications Workers of America, from 1979 to 1986.

If confirmed, Puchala would become the second Democrat on the three-member panel, along with Harry Hoglander. The other seat is held by Republican Elizabeth Dougherty. It is unclear who would take over as head of the NMB if Puchala is confirmed before Van de Water's chairmanship ends.

(Source: BNA, *Daily Labor Report*, No. 48, March 16, 2009, p. A14.)