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## **Press Release - Muskie Calls for Job Protection of Florida Workers**

Edmund S. Muskie

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# *MUSKIE*

*Maine*

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FOR RELEASE

CONTACT: Dick Stewart

IMMEDIATELY  
August 17, 1971

## MUSKIE CALLS FOR JOB PROTECTION OF FLORIDA WORKERS

Senator Edmund S. Muskie (D. - Maine) today urged the Secretary of Labor to establish wage determinations for Cape Kennedy Air Force Station and Patrick Air Force Base in order to protect the jobs and wages of those working at these bases which comprise the Eastern Test Range in Florida.

In a letter to Labor Secretary Hodgson, Muskie said that such a wage determination is the only way to protect the 5,000 employees of Pan American World Airways from massive job losses and a steep reduction in wages like those that occurred at the Kennedy Space Center earlier this year.

When a wage determination is made by the Department of Labor, contractors are prevented from cutting prior wage levels of those who are employed under government contracts. Earlier this year, a government contract at the Kennedy Space Center was opened to competition and a very low bid was accepted. The contractor, taking advantage of high unemployment rates, slashed wages and dismissed hundreds of employees.

"Because of the dramatic change in the employment situation in Florida and in the aerospace industry," the Senator wrote, "I believe those working under the Pan American contract at the Eastern Test Range must be given adequate job protection. The experience at the Kennedy Space Center must not be repeated."

The letter continued: "It is not fair to have men who have worked for years at the Test Range have their jobs wiped out or wages reduced this way. This is taking unfair advantage of the employment situation."

Muskie urged the Department of Labor to "make a wage survey of the prevailing rates among those employed at Kennedy Air Force Station and Patrick Air Force Base, Florida, in order to make a wage determination. Without this wage determination, contracts will be competed on the unfair basis of wage reductions.

A full copy of the letter is attached.

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August 17, 1971

Honorable James D. Hodgson  
Secretary  
Department of Labor  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

It has come to my attention that the United States Air Force intends to recompute the contract covering range operation and maintenance of the Air Force Eastern Test Range in Florida. This contract, which has been held by Pan American World Airways for the past eighteen years, involves the livelihood of approximately 5,000 men in Brevard County.

After the bitter experience at the Kennedy Space Center earlier this year, when hundreds of jobs were lost and pay rates were slashed due to the recompetition of a NASA contract, those associated with the Eastern Test Range naturally fear that their jobs and incomes are unfairly threatened. Because of the dramatic change in the employment situation in Florida and in the aerospace industry, I believe those working under the Pan American contract at the Eastern Test Range must be given adequate job protection. The experience at the Kennedy Space Center must not be repeated.

It is not fair to have men who have worked for years at the Test Range have their jobs wiped out or wages reduced this way. This is taking unfair advantage of the employment situation.

For this reason, I urge that the Department of Labor make a wage survey of the prevailing rates among those employed at Kennedy Air Force Station and Patrick Air Force Base, Florida, in order to make a wage determination. Without this wage determination, contracts will be competed on the unfair basis of wage reductions.

I would appreciate a prompt response to this request.

Sincerely,

(signed)

Edmund S. Muskie  
United States Senator