
Association for Airline Passenger Rights Applauds FAA Reauthorization Act; Legislation Includes Important Consumer Rights Protections

WASHINGTON, D.C. (February 12, 2009) – The [Association for Airline Passenger Rights](http://www.flyfriendlyskies.com) (AAPR) today applauded federal legislation to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for its inclusion of consumer rights protections. The legislation ([H.R.915](#)) was introduced by Representatives James Oberstar (D-MN), Chairman of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and Jerry Costello (D-IL), Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Aviation.

AAPR is a 501(c)(4) tax-exempt, nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote fairer customer service and accessibility standards in the airline industry and to improve passenger satisfaction. H.R.915 is the second piece of federal legislation introduced in the last month calling for airline passenger rights protections; last month, a stand-alone ‘Passenger Bill of Rights’ bill was introduced in both the House and Senate.

“The Oberstar-Costello legislation is a positive step toward holding the airline industry accountable and ensuring airline passengers are guaranteed minimal customer service standards,” summarized **Brandon M. Macsata**, Executive Director of the Association for Airline Passenger Rights of the provisions relating to enacting a passenger bill of rights. “The airlines have been left to ‘self-regulate’ for ten years and they have proven their inability to act accordingly. The protections being advanced by AAPR, and other consumer rights groups, do more than simply improve customer satisfaction – they improve overall quality service and safety standards.”

The legislation includes **Emergency Contingency Plans**, which would require airlines and airports to have emergency contingency plans in place and detail how they will allow passengers to deplane following excessive delays, with civil penalties if the plans are not followed.

Upon convening the February 11th subcommittee hearing on the FAA Reauthorization legislation, Chairman Costello remarked: “To address delays and customer service, H.R. 915 mandates that air carriers and airports create emergency contingency plans that are approved and enforced by DOT. This legislation also requires the DOT to publicize and maintain a hotline for consumer complaints; expand consumer complaints investigated; require air carriers to report diverted and canceled flight information monthly; and create an Aviation Consumer Protection Advisory Committee.”

AAPR commends Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA), who provided the hearing’s opening testimony, for calling on Congress to enact a Passenger Bill of Rights, as well as Rep. Mike McMahon (D-NY) for his remarks supporting the same. Also, AAPR appreciates the supportive testimony provided by Kate Hanni, President of FlyersRights.org.

AAPR was formed in response to growing dissatisfaction among American consumers toward the airline industry. According to the American Consumer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), a polling organization that rates over forty-three businesses in ten sectors based on in-depth interviewing and computer-based extrapolation of its results, the Big Six legacy airlines (full-service providers with national or international flight routes) rate the lowest of all sixteen industries surveyed in the first quarter of 2008.

For more information about the Association for Airline Passenger Rights or the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2009, please visit www.flyfriendlyskies.com or contact AAPR directly at info@flyfriendlyskies.com.

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