

Association for Airline Passenger Rights (AAPR)

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Association for Airline Passenger Rights Celebrates New DOT Rule on Airline Passenger Protections; Rule builds on protections put in place last year by DOT Secretary Ray LaHood

New protections cover ancillary fees, bumping, as well as tarmac delays

WASHINGTON, D.C. (April 20, 2011) – The [Association for Airline Passenger Rights](http://www.flyfriendlyskies.com) (“AAPR”) today celebrated the U.S. Department of Transportation’s (“DOT”) new airline passenger protections. Building upon the passenger rights regulations implemented by DOT in 2010, these new protections encompass lost bags and bag fees, full disclosure of additional fees, bumping and expansion of the tarmac delay rule. AAPR submitted comment last year when DOT announced the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (“NPRM”), calling for stronger airline passenger protections, as well as submitted guidance to the Government Accountability Office regarding the same.

“Secretary LaHood has once again demonstrated his commitment to improving the airline industry and enhancing airline passenger rights with DOT’s new protections,” said **Brandon M. Macsata**, Executive Director of the Association for Airline Passenger Rights. “Airline passengers deserve to know what are the total fares they’re paying, including ancillary fees; they deserve fair compensation for lost bags, as well as when oversold flights force them off a flight for which they purchased a ticket; and they deserve minimum protections when stuck on the tarmac, regardless whether the flight is operated by a domestic or foreign carrier. AAPR is proud to have been a part of this historic process.”

AAPR believes that these consumer protections – as well as the protection extended under the final rule published on December 30, 2009, in which DOT required certain U.S. air carriers “to adopt contingency plans for lengthy tarmac delays; respond to consumer problems; post flight delay information on their websites; and adopt, follow, and audit customer service plans” – are long overdue. For over a decade the airline industry has increasingly ignored the complaints and concerns expressed by a growing chorus of airline passengers, especially on domestic flights. U.S. air carriers have placed a greater emphasis on their profits rather than the comfort, safety and satisfaction of their customers.

“Airline passengers have a right to be treated fairly,” said Secretary LaHood in a DOT statement. “It’s just common sense that if an airline loses your bag or you get bumped from a flight because it was oversold, you should be reimbursed. The additional passenger protections we’re announcing today will help make sure air travelers are treated with the respect they deserve.”

Most provisions of the rule will take effect 120 days after its publication in the *Federal Register*. The final rule, NPRM and comments are available online at www.regulations.gov, docket DOT-OST-2010-0140. AAPR’s comments can be viewed at http://www.flyfriendlyskies.com/pdf-docs/2010_AAPR_Letter_DOT-Docket-No-DOT-OST-2010-0140_08-24-10.pdf.

For more information about the Association for Airline Passenger Rights or airline passenger protections, please visit www.flyfriendlyskies.com or contact AAPR directly at info@flyfriendlyskies.com.

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About AAPR: The Association for Airline Passenger Rights 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. AAPR was formed in response to growing dissatisfaction among American consumers toward the airline industry.

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