



May 28, 2024

The Honorable Maria Cantwell, Chair
Committee on Commerce, Science, & Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Consumer protection in the FAA reauthorization legislation

Dear Chair Cantwell:

On May 16, President Biden signed the “The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024,” landmark legislation that reauthorized the Federal Aviation Administration through 2028.¹ Thanks to your leadership, the bill includes critical new consumer protection provisions that you and your colleagues on the Senate Commerce Committee championed. These important new regulations will promote fairness and competition in an industry where passenger rights are too often an afterthought.

We are particularly grateful for your leadership on the following policy victories:

- For the first time, setting clear rules for when consumers have the right to a refund due to significant delays and cancellations;
- Ensuring that airline credits must be usable for at least 5 years;
- Prohibiting airlines from charging parents extra to be seated with their young children;

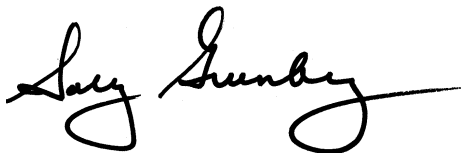
- Requiring air carriers to maintain free, 24/7 access to customer service agents by phone, live chat or text message; and
- Mandating that FAA finally end seat shrinkage by establishing minimum seat size standards.

In addition, your leadership has helped enshrine in statute structural reforms that will fundamentally strengthen passenger rights for years to come, including:

- Creating a new ally for passengers at DOT by establishing a Senate-confirmed Assistant Secretary of Aviation Consumer Protection position; and
- Tripling civil penalties for violations of passenger protection laws from \$25,000 to \$75,000 per violation.

Legislating in a divided Congress is never easy, but your leadership on the FAA reauthorization bill helped deliver real, bipartisan achievements. The FAA reauthorization bill will help make flying for Washingtonians and all Americans a fairer and more pleasant experience.

Sincerely,



Sally Greenberg
President and CEO
National Consumers League

ⁱ The White House. "Statement from President Joe Biden After Signing FAA Reauthorization Act." Press release. (May 16, 2024) Online: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/05/16/statement-from-president-joe-biden-after-signing-faa-reauthorization-act/>