

August 7, 2017

Dear Members of Congress,

We write to share our strong support for maintaining the global framework of U.S. Open Skies aviation agreements. We are a diverse group of companies and organizations that benefit from an open and competitive airline system. Open Skies promote competition in the airline industry, reduce costs for airline passengers, facilitate U.S. exports, support U.S. jobs, and strengthen local economies.

During the last three decades, the United States has negotiated Open Skies agreements with more than 100 countries around the world with the support of Democrat and Republican Administrations. These agreements create open markets for airline services and eliminate government interference in commercial decisions about the routes, frequency, pricing, and capacity of airline service, both for passenger and cargo carriers.

Open Skies agreements deliver substantial benefits for the U.S. economy. They open markets and [save customers](#) \$4 billion on international travel every year. They enable cargo carriers to create global route networks, helping U.S. companies export millions of tons of cargo to customers across the world. They facilitate international tourism to the United States, which [brings nearly \\$250 billion](#) of spending into our local economies and small businesses. All in all, Open Skies agreements support more than 15 million U.S. tourism and hospitality jobs.

Unfortunately, these jobs are potentially jeopardized by demands from three U.S. passenger airlines to restrict access to the U.S. market for two Open Skies partners, in breach of our obligations. These airlines complain of unfair subsidies but have chosen not to use the Department of Transportation procedures that Congress established to hear such claims. We urge the Administration to protect Open Skies by insisting that these claims be assessed on the merits and in the proper forum.

We appreciate this opportunity to share our view and would welcome the opportunity to discuss this issue with you.

Sincerely,

Ad Hoc Committee  
Airport Council International - North America  
Alaska Air  
Atlas Air  
Business Travel Coalition  
Cargo Airlines Association  
ChangingPlanes.com  
Colwick Travel  
FedEx

Galaxy Travel & Cruises  
Geraci Travel  
Global Travel Strategies LLC  
GlobalPoint Travel Solutions  
Greater Orlando Aviation Authority  
Hawaiian Airlines  
Hidden Treasure Tours  
Houston Airport System  
JetBlue  
Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority  
LXR Travel  
McCarran International Airport  
Memphis International Airport  
Options Travel  
Sheraton New Orleans  
Travelers United  
US Travel Association  
Wyndham Worldwide

CC: Secretary of State Rex Tillerson  
Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao  
Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross  
U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer  
NEC Director Gary Cohn