

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 9, 2025

Hon. Sean Duffy
Secretary
Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

Secretary Duffy:

We write to urge the Department of Transportation (DOT) to reconsider its recent rescission of proposed regulations necessary to protect air travelers and lower aviation costs for Americans. Rolling back this rulemaking will prioritize the revenues of large corporations over everyday families' wallets, running counter to the President's promise to communities across the country.

On December 11, 2024, the DOT issued an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM)¹ exploring commercial airline passenger protections. Specifically, the Department examined requiring commercial airlines to offer compensation for significant delays or cancellations caused by a carrier due to mechanical delays, staffing issues, or technological outages. The proposed rule would have ensured that the aforementioned compensation was commensurate with the inconvenience of the delay or cancellation, as well as whether the passenger could travel via alternative flights. The DOT additionally aimed to expand commercial airlines' rebooking policies to ensure that, if a flight was delayed beyond a given threshold or canceled altogether, airlines would rebook the traveler with other carriers. Finally, the proposal would have charged airlines with covering the cost of food, lodging, and related transportation costs for consumers who experienced delays or cancellations so significant that they had to endure an unplanned overnight stay.

This proposal reflected the reality that hardworking Americans set aside significant resources—namely, their time and money—to travel. Whether the trip is for work or vacation, middle- and working-class consumers should not face additional costs on top of the initial ticket if commercial carriers fail to provide their services. Particularly as Americans budget for across-the-board price increases to the tune of 1.7 percent, or \$2,300 per year², the Department should not burden consumers with additional costs. Saddling consumers with food, lodging, and additional travel costs in the event of a flight disruption instead of making large corporations compensate for delays or cancellations is a disservice to the communities we represent. Instead, the federal government must stick up for everyday consumers who are already struggling to make ends meet—families across the country need us to act quickly to lower costs and protect them from corporate greed.

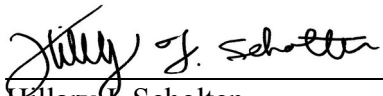
The DOT argued that this rulemaking withdrawal is consistent with the Administration's priorities. However, before his inauguration, then-President-elect Trump committed to “immediately [bringing] prices down.”³ This move from the Department is antithetical to the President's statement and will force consumers to pick up the costs associated with commercial airlines' shortcomings. We stand ready to work alongside the President and the DOT to make good on promises to lower costs for Americans, but gutting consumer protections will not actualize our common objective. Thank you for your time and attention to this pressing matter.

Sincerely,

¹ <https://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/eAgendaViewRule?pubId=202504&RIN=2105-AF20>

² <https://budgetlab.yale.edu/research/state-us-tariffs-september-4-2025>

³ <https://www.cnn.com/2025/01/28/economy/trump-inflation-price-promises>

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Hillary J. Scholten", written over a horizontal line.

Hillary J. Scholten
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Derek T. Tran", written over a horizontal line.

Derek T. Tran
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Greg Landsman", written over a horizontal line.

Greg Landsman
Member of Congress