



CWA Passenger Services

CWA Agents Welcome New Bill vs. Abusive Passengers

As travel has returned to more normal levels in 2022, Passenger Service Agents remain on the front lines, experiencing threats from disruptive passengers and unsafe working conditions in airports all over the country. In response to this ongoing problem, on April 6, Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) and U.S. Representative Eric Swalwell (D-CA) introduced the Protection from Abusive Passengers Act in both houses of Congress. The Act is designed to improve aviation safety and hold passengers convicted of intimidation, threats, or physical violence against aviation professionals accountable for their actions.

We are all aware of the huge increase in disruptive and violent passenger incidents since 2020. According to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), as of March 28, 2022, there have been more than 1,000 unruly passenger reports, but only 302 investigations initiated, and 136 FAA enforcement action cases initiated. The FAA reported a total of 5,981 passenger incidents in 2021, a dramatic increase from previous years.

Our union, the FAA, Transportation Security Administration, and Department of Justice have worked together over the past few years to end these incidents and prevent unruly passengers from repeating dangerous behavior. Currently, an individual passenger can be fined, convicted, and banned from an airline for their actions. However, there is no mechanism to prevent that passenger from flying on another airline. The newly proposed legislation would finally close that loophole and fully ground those disruptive individuals who repeatedly put agents, flight attendants, and other passengers in danger.

The Protection from Abusive Passengers Act would place those convicted of intimidation or assault onboard a flight on a new commercial no-fly list managed by the TSA. By taking away their ability to fly

commercially, these disruptive passengers would no longer threaten Passenger Service Agents, TSA crew, and passengers within airports.

As CWA members and airline passenger service professionals, we view the legislation proposed by Sen. Reed and Rep. Swallwell as a strong step toward ending dangerous behavior and restoring the integrity and safety of airports across the country for everyone.

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