

March 10, 2014

The Honorable Bill Shuster  
Chairman, Transportation & Infrastructure Committee  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Tom Graves  
432 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Shuster and Congressman Graves,

We write to encourage your colleagues to co-sponsor and otherwise support your bill, H.R. 4156, the Transparent Airfares Act. Your bill is a vital step toward airfare transparency and the end of the Department of Transportation's discriminatory regulations that target airlines and travelers.

DOT's current regulations require all government taxes and fees to be embedded in the advertised price of a ticket. Although DOT's policies were enacted under the guise of consumer protection, these requirements actually obscure the real cost of airline travel, hiding the costs government adds to a vital industry.

The Transparent Airfares Act will allow airlines to inform flyers of the true cost of air travel by breaking out taxes and fees from the base fare. This repeals the current requirement that airlines advertise artificially high prices, providing a more transparent and competitive market place for travelers.

This legislation guarantees flights receive the same level of transparency as a number of other travel purchases such as hotel rooms and rental cars. These industries are also targeted for high levels of discriminatory taxes, but are allowed to itemize these government costs for their customers to see. According to our annual 'Tax Bites' research, government taxes and fees make up 44 percent of the cost of a flight. Continuing current DOT policies will allow those costs to remain hidden from consumers.

If DOT is truly interested in consumer protection, the Secretary should work with lawmakers to relieve the excessive costs imposed by government on travelers.

Thus, we encourage lawmakers to support H.R. 4156 and look forward to working with you to protect American travelers and taxpayers.

Sincerely,



Grover Norquist  
President  
Americans for Tax Reform



Mattie Duppler  
Executive Director  
Cost of Government Center