

**Eric M. Swalwell**  
**Member of Congress**  
**California's Fourteenth Congressional District**  
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Member Day Hearing

Chairman Graves and Ranking Member Larsen, thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts as the committee develops reauthorizing legislation for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, United States Coast Guard, and others affecting our infrastructure and supply chain.

I want to highlight an issue that I am especially passionate about—protecting those who protect us when we travel. Pilots, flight crew, and flight attendants are some of the hardest working Americans in this country. This is especially the case as they navigated pre- and post-pandemic travel, often prioritizing our right to travel over their own health and safety. That is why we must ensure that they are protected from unprovoked violence at the hands of unruly passengers.

My bicameral and bipartisan legislation, the *Protection from Abusive Passengers Act*, achieves this goal by limiting especially violent passengers from placing pilots, flight crew, flight attendants, and the traveling public in serious danger. The premise of the legislation is simple: if you commit violence in our skies, you will not fly.

In 2022 alone, the FAA investigated 831 unruly-passenger incidents stemming from over 2,400 reports of violence in our skies, an almost 600% increase from just a few years ago. The FAA and Department of Justice (DOJ) have taken important steps, from increasing civil fines, to prioritizing prosecutions for assaults against flight crew and attendants. Yet, even when a passenger is fined or convicted, it does not prevent the offender from flying. There must clear

uniform safety standards that protect all flight crew, flight attendants, and the traveling public when unacceptable violent behavior occurs in flight.

My legislation would ensure that those who assault aircraft crew cannot continue to endanger others by directing TSA to oversee a program which bars passengers after they are fined or convicted of serious physical violence. The bill would also permanently ban abusive passengers from participating in the TSA PreCheck or Customs' Global Entry programs.

Increased transparency and notice will be provided to banned individuals, including guidelines for removal and opportunities for appeal. This includes requirements that passengers receive advanced notice of the program's requirements, rules, and procedures in line with existing due process rights that are afforded to any individual facing an adjudicative penalty. Other safeguards will be provided to individuals who are erroneously added to the no-fly list, as well as a study to ensure that the program is working as intended so that no race, ethnicity, or other protected class is unfairly targeted.

To be clear, no passenger will ever be referred to this no-fly list unless and until they are first provided with the opportunity to be heard during a criminal prosecution by the DOJ, or a civil action initiated by the FAA. Our process would provide passengers will ample opportunities for legal representation and notice, including a court-appointed lawyer in all criminal prosecutions.

In summary, the *Protection from Abusive Passengers Act* safeguards flight crew while implementing a transparent and accountable TSA process that will limit serious sexual and physical abusers from endangering commercial flights.

Flight attendants, pilots, and other essential airline workers are first responders in the sky and critical to passenger safety and security. Unruly passenger events divert attention away from

this primary function and add unnecessary risk into our national airspace. Aviation workers should never have to seek protection from abusive passengers. They deserve a safe work environment so they can focus on the safety and security of the traveling public.

I am proud that the *Protection from Abusive Passengers Act* is supported by the Air Line Pilots Association; Association of Flight Attendants, CWA; Association of Professional Flight Attendants; Transport Workers Union of America, AFL-CIO; Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO; Communications Workers of America (CWA); American Airlines; Delta Air Lines; and Southwest Airlines.

I respectfully ask that my bipartisan legislation be included in any reauthorizing package the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure will consider this Congress to send a strong message that Democrats and Republicans alike will adopt a zero-tolerance policy towards violent behavior in our skies. I look forward to working with the Chairman and Ranking Member to move this priority forward. Thank you for your consideration.