

2021 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 221

BY REPRESENTATIVE MARCELLE

A RESOLUTION

To memorialize the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to compel the Federal Aviation Administration to protect the rights of consumers by setting consistent standards across airlines for passenger baggage and other ancillary fees.

WHEREAS, the United States Congress largely determines the degree to which certain rights of airline passengers are codified in law or developed through regulatory rulemaking; and

WHEREAS, in 2008, the first major United States carrier imposed a fee for checked baggage; and

WHEREAS, all major carriers now charge an additional fee for checked baggage with the exception of Southwest airlines subject to weight requirements; and

WHEREAS, airlines have been under financial pressure to offset the cost of rising fuel prices, and many airlines now charge excess baggage fees for checking one or more pieces of luggage, with some even charging for carry-ons; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, several airlines raised the fee for the first checked bag from twenty-five to thirty dollars, which amounts to a twenty percent increase; and

WHEREAS, airlines' bag and reservation fee collections have increased every year for more than a decade; and

WHEREAS, airlines' bag fees have exceeded one billion every quarter for more than three years with the exception of the second through fourth quarters in 2020 due to the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics reported that airlines collectively generated eight billion six hundred million in baggage and other ancillary fees; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics reported that airlines collectively generated two billion eight million in reservation change fees; and

WHEREAS, many airline passengers have expressed concerns over baggage policies that are inconsistent across airlines; and

WHEREAS, airline baggage fees have become progressively more confusing, complicated, and expensive; and

WHEREAS, although baggage fees are displayed on the airlines' websites, consumers report that additional hidden fees are not mentioned; and

WHEREAS, certain airlines charge up to forty-five dollars for carry-on bags and have additional complications; and

WHEREAS, airline baggage fees can vary depending on when and where passengers add bags; and

WHEREAS, one of the top ten customer complaints about the airline industry is hidden charges and cost; and

WHEREAS, the aforementioned concerns of airline passengers are issues of consumer protection for which the United State Congress has the constitutional power to address and determine fair and reasonable solutions through codified law and regulatory rulemaking.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby memorialize the United States Congress to take such actions as are necessary to work with the Federal Aviation Administration to set consistent standards across airlines for baggage and other ancillary fees that are reasonable and proportional to the cost of services to eliminate airlines' potential for price gouging.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United State Congress should consider enacting legislation that addresses the issues of transparency by mandating that airlines disclose hidden fees so that consumers can obtain an all inclusive airfare price.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United State Congress should also consider legislation that prohibits airlines from charging fees on carry-on baggage which meets existing restrictions on the weight, size, and number of bags.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the United State Congress should consider directing the appropriate federal agency to conduct an audit on airlines' policies relative to baggage and other ancillary fees.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the presiding officers of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States Congress and to each member of the Louisiana congressional delegation.

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES