



December 4, 2015

Honorable Thad Cochran, Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-128 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Barbara Mikulski, Vice Chair
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations
S-128 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: Support for Section 105 of the Senate Transportation Appropriations Bill

Dear Chairman Cochran and Vice Chair Mikulski:

The undersigned organizations are writing in support of Section 105 of the Senate Transportation Appropriations bill. We ask you to reject efforts to strike Section 105, concerning regulation of ticket agents.

Removal of Section 105 would give the Department of Transportation (DOT) the green light for unneeded regulation of e-commerce. Moreover, it would enable DOT to achieve regulatory overreach not backed by facts or evidence.

Today consumers from across the country can easily find the lowest travel prices. Online travel companies and meta-search engines like Kayak and TripAdvisor allow easy and instant flight searches across dozens of airlines. This has created greater transparency of airline prices and generated significant savings for American travelers.

There is simply no reason to impose a new regulatory scheme on the Internet. DOT failed to find a factual basis to justify their intent to regulate online consumer services:

“We are not aware of whether there is widespread problem of consumers being confused by Web sites that do not sell tickets but do provide fare, schedule, and availability information that consumers are relying on in planning their travel.” (79 FR 29969, May 23, 2014)¹.

The DOT’s regulatory overreach with its proposed rules would likely diminish the consumer benefits of comparison-shopping for their travel options.

Moreover, DOT expects these harms to consumers to cost the industry in excess of \$80 million over 10 years. These new costs would result in higher prices for consumers, and DOT acknowledges that “***the quantifiable costs of this rulemaking exceed the quantifiable benefits.***” (79 FR 29969, May 23, 2014)².

For these reasons, we encourage you to reject efforts to remove Section 105.

Thank you for considering our views and please let us know if we can provide further information.

Sincerely,

Internet Association
Internet Coalition
NetChoice
Travel Technology Association

cc: Sen. Jack Reed and Sen. Susan Collins

¹ DOT NPRM, at <https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/Passenger%20Protections%20NPRM%20April%2016%202014.docx>

² <https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/Passenger%20Protections%20NPRM%20April%2016%202014.docx>