

137501

OST-01-9849



PROACTIVE TECHNOLOGIES, INC.

Human Resource Management for Tomorrow... Today!

August 22, 2001 - 16

01 AUG 22 AM 2:50

DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION

Department of Transportation
Attn: Document Operations PL401
400 7th Street SW
Washington, DC 20590

via fax: 202-493-2251
Page 1 of 2

re: Proposal to Increase Business Travelers Airfares at Busy Airports During Peak Hours

Dear Sir or Madame:

Please enter my comments into the record for this misguided proposal.

I heard of your recent announcement of a proposal to add a fee to air traveler's tickets for those who travel during peak hours at busy airports - more concisely called a fee on business travel. This is the most ridiculous, insensitive and obnoxious idea which shows, once again, how detached members of government in Washington have become from the common man or businessman. If you think that we business travelers want to pass through these busy airports on our way to and from business meetings, you are grossly mistaken. We travel when and to where the big airlines tell us we can travel to come up with a remotely affordable airfare.

It was the Department of Transportation, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Justice Department and Congress that sat silent and/or turned away while airlines consolidated into a few big, powerful airlines driving competition, except where collusion cloaked as competition was present, away from the consumer. In 1990, my round-trip fare from Denver to Columbus, Ohio (leaving on Monday and returning on Friday) was around \$380.00. When the new Denver International Airport opened in around 1994, my airfare for the same flight went to \$1,080.00 RT COACH! This is because United dominated the airport and set the price to which even supposed low-fare carriers aspired. Now, that fare is around \$1,700 coach. Check for yourself (don't tell them who you are when asking).

It was the Department of Transportation, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Justice Department and Congress that sat silent and/or turned away while these huge airlines dropped more and more direct flights to smaller cities, and even went so far to drive smaller airlines attempting to take-over the abandoned routes out of business. They did this by offering a competitive lower fare only briefly enough to undermine the upstart's efforts, then these larger airlines dropped the route again (e.g. United and flights to Wyoming, Montana and Colorado to name a few in the 90's).

Department of Transportation
Page 2 of 2

It was the Department of Transportation, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Justice Department and Congress that sat silent and/or turned away while these huge airlines became arrogant and incompetent to provide excellent service at this size. Bags are lost, flights are delayed, accidents occur, passengers are inconvenienced. Business travelers, who have to fly to get to their work, have been inconvenienced and abused much more frequently than the occasional traveler, yet our airfares have gone up by 300-500%.

It was the Department of Transportation, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Justice Department and Congress that sat silent and/or turned away while these huge airlines forced the "hub" concept on air travelers. Now, since these airlines controlled the skies, if you wanted to travel you had to fly through these few hub cities (e.g Delta - Salt Lake, Atlanta; United - Denver, Chicago; TWA (and now TWA-American) - Chicago, St Louis, Boston; Etc.). Do you think for one minute that business travelers want to travel through these cities during peak or at anytime at all? It is the only way to get to our business at an airfare we can afford!

It was the Department of Transportation, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Justice Department and Congress that sat silent and/or turned away while these huge airlines, hotels, car rental companies and local governments taxed and charged fees to business travelers to death. To rent a car in some cities expect taxes, surcharges and fees in excess of 28%. Hotel taxes in some cities are getting close to that. Business travelers are paying for stadiums they will never use, convention centers they most likely will not see, and the other bond issues that local government feel they can tack onto business travelers without angering local constituents. Today, every major city is now doing it. Those cities think that this will be hard for the people to figure out who is to blame. Yet, since these rates apply everywhere we go, the traveler only knows collusion by the huge and powerful and greediness of local, state and federal governments.

How well do YOU think this is working? How many businesses do you think you have put under by the above mentioned inordinate and unreasonable policies? Do you care at all? Do you have a vision of a stable U. S. economy and thriving communities?

Maybe government should give up their discount fare for government travelers and let government workers travel with us business travelers. It would surely lead to fast response in outrage and action to minimize your pain, but probably only action in your interests. We business travelers have been screwed and continue to be screwed. Enough is enough, don't you think?!

Sincerely,


Dean Prigelmeier
President