

# They said it best...

Delta Air Lines, United Airlines and American Airlines want the U.S. Government to selectively block airline competition, but an abundance of U.S. and international stakeholders disagree. See what U.S. airports and communities, travel and tourism industry associations, passenger airlines, cargo operators, businesses and many more have to say.



If the United States were to weaken its Open Skies policy generally or with respect to targeted countries, ACI-NA believes that many of the benefits enjoyed today could be decreased. We also expect that the leadership role of the U.S. Government in the international aviation community would be seriously damaged, thus undercutting U.S. efforts to liberalize aviation regimes with other countries, and raising the risks that current Open Skies agreements could be undermined as other countries may try to limit U.S. airlines, citing U.S. airline advantages as unfair competition.” - **Kevin M. Burke**, President & CEO of Airports Council International—North America

“Open Skies continues to provide significant derivative benefits to consumers and the United States economy through added travel and shipping opportunities, increased economic activity and higher US employment – in other words, broader US economic and political interests.” - **William J. Flynn**, President & CEO of Atlas Air Worldwide

“For FedEx, the Open Skies agreements with the Middle Eastern countries are very valuable. Under the agreement with the UAE we have established a hub in Dubai, where FedEx flights from the US criss-cross with our flights from India and Asia in order to move US products into local markets. The US should not capitulate to the interests of a few carriers who stand ready to put their narrow, protectionist interests ahead of the economic benefits that Open Skies provides to the people of the US.” - **David J. Bronczek**, President and CEO of FedEx

“Because our networks depend upon the ‘beyond rights’ granted by these foreign countries, our entire worldwide network would be placed in jeopardy if those rights were scaled back resulting in significant negative economic impact.” - **Chief Executive Officers** of the Board Member companies of the Cargo Airline Association

“The major US carriers have opposed Open Skies and reregulation all along the way, even from the word go, and yet have been major beneficiaries due to domestic consolidation and also globally in terms of market access. Protectionism is making a revival as some of the powerful national airlines exert strong pressure on their governments.” - **Peter Harbison**, Centre for Aviation

“Absent of Open Skies we believe that Emirates may not have been able to enter the Seattle market in March of 2012, yet their non-stop service to Dubai is often the quickest and most direct way for our US customers to travel to the Middle East, Africa and India from the Pacific Northwest. Open Skies enables carriers such as Emirates to have access to the US which in turn fuels Alaska Airlines growth so we can effectively compete as a 4% market share carrier in a consolidated US industry.”

- **Bradley D. Tilden**, President & CEO of Alaska Airlines

“Now that the U.S. Big Three airlines – Delta Air Lines, American Airlines, United Airlines – have secured antitrust immunity for their global alliances and joint ventures, and have engineered domestic consolidation, they have in recent years been aggressively attacking consumer protections, price transparency and domestic and foreign carrier new entrant competition.”

- **Kevin Mitchell**, Chairman of the Business Travel Coalition

“It is also worrying to see protectionism rearing its head again, notably in the US where some carriers complain the Open Skies arrangements are benefiting non-US airlines, most particularly the Gulf carriers.” - **Willie Walsh**, CEO of International Airlines Group

“Consumers win when there are more competitors in the aviation marketplace, and the economy and job creation win when inbound visitation to U.S. destinations is on the rise. Emirates Airlines’ new flight to Orlando accomplishes both. We hope we can look forward to more and more international flights to the many attractive but underserved markets all over the United States.” -

**Roger Dow**, U.S. Travel Association President and CEO

“The Big Three airlines hate competition, and rather than cope with it in the marketplace they will undertake extreme means to stamp it out politically.” - **Jonathan Grella**, Executive Vice President for Public Affairs at the US Travel Association

“Even if the US campaign somehow manages to roll back the U.S. Open Skies agreements with the UAE and Qatar – which would be a travesty – or curtail the growth of US city destinations served by the Gulf carriers, regulators should carefully examine evidence that the US carriers would, indeed, step up and operate to those sub-Indian destinations.” - **Karen Walker**, Editor of Air Transport World

“Emirates new and increased operations, like those of other foreign carriers operating to the United States, are precisely what will be needed in order to achieve President Obama’s goal to grow international visitors to the United States. In the year since JetBlue entered the former Delta monopoly route BOS-DTW, fares have fallen nearly 40 percent and daily passenger traffic has more than doubled. All of this activity increases job growth.” - **Robin Hayes**, President of JetBlue

“We believe in the open-skies agreement because it is a facilitator of economic growth. Economic growth is the driver of airline manufacturing and airlines facilitate economic growth.”

- **Marty Bentrutt**, Vice President of Middle East, Russia and Central Asia sales for Boeing

“Despite the Big 3’s stated desire to keep government out of the market’s workings, they seem to want the US Government to guarantee their continued market share, as if US consumers must be funnelled to the “correct” choice of a US carrier each time they travel. We cannot accept the idea that is woven into the white paper (and the subsequent economic analysis released by the Big 3) that it is against US policy for traffic to be “shifted away” from US airlines by effective foreign competition. US passengers are not assigned by law to US airlines. If consumers want to use a foreign carrier, that should not be a problem that the US Government needs to fix, but instead should be a capitalistic challenge for the losing carrier.” - **Nancy Sparks**, Managing Director of Regulatory Affairs at Fedex

“The Gulf Carriers’ flights generate “hundreds of millions of dollars” in annual economic benefits for the Dallas-Fort Worth region, with Emirates being singled out as the single largest contributor with \$300 million in annual economic benefit.” - **John Ackerman**, Executive Vice President Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport

“Therefore, we are concerned that a reversal of this support would set a dangerous precedent for more wide-ranging future actions which would have damaging consequences to the American economy.” - **Edward Davidson**, President of National Air Cargo Association

“Not only do Gulf carriers bring competitive service and prices, they also stimulate the market, so that much of the increase in their own passenger traffic is incremental, not taken from existing operators. IAG disputes the evidence and conclusions that unfair subsidies are being provided by the Gulf States to the Gulf airlines contained in the White Paper prepared by American, Delta and United. IAG believes the evidence and therefore the conclusions to be unreliable and wholly inappropriate as a means of informing important government policy decisions. The White Paper’s arguments should be rejected as a return to international aviation policies that protect airlines from competitors instead of fostering competition.” - **International Airlines Group** statement

“...Any attempt to limit or restrict existing Open Skies rights is unwise. Neither the US economy nor our economy in Central Florida can afford the Open Skies policy departure that is being urged in this matter. The Orlando area certainly cannot afford to lose the more than \$100 million in new annual economic activity Emirates’ new Orlando-Dubai non-stop flight will generate, and the nearly 1,500 jobs it will support.” - **Phil Brown**, CEO of Orlando Airport

“So the idea that American and Delta and United have for 20 years been benefitting from Open Skies agreements and more liberal access to foreign markets, and now suddenly want to pull up the drawbridge and close off the U.S. to foreign carriers, it’s the height of hypocrisy. I think most people would say one can offer a fair argument, and even if you disagree with it you can respect it. But being intellectually dishonest is a different thing. And I don’t see how you can make the case that the same airlines that have benefitted from liberalization of agreements should now want to reverse that and shut down access to foreign carriers.” - **William J. McGee**, formerly of the Consumers Union and author of *Attention All Passengers*

“We strongly believe that current policies, such as Open Skies agreements, have furthered those interests and must be maintained and protected. Open Skies has benefitted the travel and tourism economy – indeed the economy as a whole – for decades, and it provides the framework upon which the international travel marketplace can thrive and grow. Any attempts to undo or restrict Open Skies will only have the effect of reducing competition and limiting the potential for the immense, positive economic impact that derives from more international visitors coming to the United States.” - **Stephen Shur**, President of the Travel Technology Association

“It is ironic that Delta, United and American have complained about the growth of these Gulf nation carriers given that the US carriers have largely ignored serving this entire region. While the Gulf carriers have actively grown their networks across the Middle East, Africa and India, Delta, United and American have chosen to only serve a combined four markets in the Middle East and four in Africa. Further, in India and Pakistan, where the Gulf carriers have extensive networks that feed their hubs and flow traffic to the US, Delta, United and American provide just two daily flights combined. Although they have elected not to provide meaningful service levels or competitive services to these growing regions, which are and have been available for them to serve under existing Open Skies agreements, they now complain about the success of those who do compete in these markets under the premise that it is somehow wrongly achieved.” - **Robert Land**, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs, Jet Blue

“Suspending capacity expansion for these international carriers by suspending our Open Skies policies undermines the Administration’s National Travel and Tourism Strategy. In 2013, the three Gulf carriers brought 140,600 international visitors to the U.S. These visitors spent nearly \$1 billion here, which generated more than \$2 billion in economic output and supported more than 15,000 American jobs. If the U.S. government were to freeze the Gulf carriers’ frequencies, as some U.S. carriers have requested, this would damage the success of the Open Skies agreements and send a wrong signal to our trading partners, jeopardizing the entire Open Skies framework. Open Skies has stimulated international travel and must be continued without interference by the domestic carriers.”

- **Rosemary Vassiliadis**, Director of Aviation at Las Vegas Airport

“We believe that your respective agencies should not submit to pressure by domestic carriers to back out of these agreements. Such action would have negative ramifications for Asian business travellers, as well as for the local economy of Southern California. Many Asian Americans in and around Los Angeles currently rely on Etihad and Emirates Airways and look forward to the expected entry of Qatar Airways into LAX in 2016. The flights already offered by the UAE carriers have significantly expanded options for reaching points in Southeast Asia. Their presence has positively affected fares and service, and in many cases, the routes are more direct than those offered by other carriers.” **Kim-Yen Huynh**, CEO of the Asian American Business Women Association

“We are, at our heart, kind of free traders, and we believe that Open Skies exists for a reason, and we don’t think that reason has changed. We like to see free flow of trade, people, air travel, if you will, and that’s what we advocate.” - **John Rice**, Vice Chairman of GE

“So now, the champions of open competition and the choice of the market turned 180 degrees and launched their protectionist legal barrage. And careless of passenger, destination or societal interest they want the rules of the game changed again. Because the competitive heat in the kitchen they designed, built and pushed around the globe just got too hot to handle. A read of the claims and responses makes it very clear that open skies is a better bet for the world community and for passengers, as well as the US economy – and the country that has successfully sold this now globally recognized concept to the world is faced with two choices – be bold and stay with your vision or be weak - because some of your airlines don’t like the consequences - and sink into the abyss of protectionism.” - **Professor Geoffrey Lipman**, President of the International Coalition of Tourism Partners and formerly Head of Government Affairs at IATA and President of the WTTC

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Our response to the Delta Air Lines, United Airlines and American Airlines allegations – which consist of a series of demonstrably inaccurate assertions, outright distortions, and misinterpretations of applicable law, including the U.S.-UAE Open Skies Agreement – has been submitted to the United States Government.

Read it here: [www.emirates.com/USsubsidyRebuttal](http://www.emirates.com/USsubsidyRebuttal)