



Consumer Federation of America

July 18, 2014

Dear Representative:

Consumer Federation of America, a nonprofit association of consumer organizations around the country that represent the interests of millions of your constituents, urges you to reject H.R. 4156, the Transparent Airline Act of 2014. This bill may be taken up on the suspension calendar, but at whatever point it is presented, we ask you to oppose it.

There is nothing transparent, or pro-consumer, about this bill. It would allow airlines to advertise fares that do not include the mandatory taxes, hiding the true cost until consumers reach the end of the purchase process. This would make the cost of airline tickets appear artificially low and prevent budget-conscious consumers from determining upfront whether they can afford to fly and how the cost of doing so compares to other options, such as traveling to their destinations by train or car.

The argument that consumers are entitled to know how much of the ticket price is comprised of taxes is totally disingenuous – that breakdown does show before consumers complete their purchases. Unlike charges for things such as checked baggage and extra legroom, however, taxes are not optional. Therefore, consumers do not base their air travel decisions on the amount of the taxes, which are standardized. Just as with buying gasoline, they shop for airline tickets based on the total cost including taxes. They are entitled to know that cost at the onset.

Please stand with the traveling public in supporting real truth in airfares by rejecting H.R. 4156.

Sincerely yours,

Susan Grant
Director of Consumer Protection