

Passenger Rights Legislation - Not now - Not this way

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Many in the passenger rights movement believe there should be legislation that dictates that if a plane is on the tarmac for 3 hours and the pilot does not believe they will take off within 30 minutes, the airline must allow anyone off the plane who wants off the plane.

Let's consider how this could work ...

You are flying from New York to Chicago - scheduled departure is 4:00 p.m.

Flight departs gate on time at 4:00 p.m. with 172 passengers.

Air traffic in New York is tough - low clouds - rain and sleet.

Your plane gets in line but due to the weather, everything seems to be operating in slow motion.

Your plane is moving slowly to its position for take-off.

Three hours pass and your pilot does not believe you will take off within 30 minutes.

The 3 hours Passenger Rights Legislation now takes effect - requiring the airline to deplane anyone who wants off.

1 person wants off - 1 out of 172 but according to passenger rights legislation, the plane must return to the gate to deplane this passenger.

The plane returns to the gate - the 1 passenger gets off - you depart the gate - and start the process all over again.

Some say this is not how it will work - that once a plane returns to the gate, their place in line will be held for them. Suppose 10 planes do the same thing - where do you park those 10 planes on the tarmac while they are waiting to 'get back in line in their original spot'? It ain't gonna work folks!

The only time an airplane makes money is when it is in the air - so why would airlines want them sitting on the ground for hours at a time - they don't. Yes, there have been some very unfortunate and uncalled for incidence - but changes in procedures have kept these situations to an absolute minimum. It is getting better and it will continue to get better.

A wolf in sheep's clothing

The 3 hour rule? That's not all they want! On the blog *Fighting to Ban Alcohol from Airports and Airplanes* Kate Hanni, director of the Coalition for an Airline Passenger Bill of Rights (CAPBOR) answered an obvious request for assistance for this cause, with the following: ... 'David ... I wish I could be more effective, but we need to get our first piece of legislation passed so it can be amended later with laws like yours suggest would be good'. {sic}

The last thing we need is government intervention and regulation of the airline industry. Kate Hanni was unfortunately stranded on a plane for 10 hours, but I worked in a government regulated airline industry for 10 years, and trust me - it was NOT consumer friendly - NOT consumer friendly at all.

With forty years in this industry - that's how I see it!

This proposed legislation invites many questions - questions I will be asking in the coming weeks. We need to explore more - much more about proposed government intervention in the airline industry.

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