

[Home](#) [About](#) [Contact](#) [Advocacy](#) [Press Room](#) [Join BTC](#) [Best of Travelogue](#) [Travelogue Archives](#)

## July 15 – Consumer Groups' Letter To U.S. House Members

Dear Members of the U.S. House of Representatives,

We the undersigned consumer groups have learned that highly controversial H.R. 4156, the Transparent Airfares Act of 2014, is on the short list in the House for possible inclusion on the Suspension Calendar prior to the August recess. H.R. 4156 is contentious legislation that would harm millions of consumers by reversing a U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) rule implemented in 2012 as a cure to misleading airline advertising. We urge you to strongly object to the inclusion of H.R. 4156 on the Suspension Calendar.

Consumer groups were not alerted to the prospect of this legislation, nor were we provided any opportunity for input before Committee markup. H.R. 4156 was rushed by voice vote through the House Transportation Committee on April 9, 2014 after just 9 minutes of discussion. There were no hearings, no outreach for public opinion. This rushed process has denied other stakeholders an opportunity to inform Congress of their views and the flaws in this bill.

Now, after steamrolling the bill through Committee, airlines hope to rush the bill through the House under Suspension of the Rules. But this is not the type of unobjectionable proposal that the Suspension Calendar is designed for; rather, it is harmful and controversial special-interest legislation. There is not one consumer group or business travel organization that supports this legislation; most have publicly criticized both the bill and the rushed process.

This anti-consumer legislation serves no purpose, in our view, other than to mislead consumers about the real price of airfare -- to the benefit of airlines, but at the expense of consumers.

Indeed, The New York Times Editorial Board on April 22 criticized the bill in an editorial saying: "This push to mislead consumers is particularly galling since recent mergers, like that of American Airlines and US Airways, have made the industry less competitive." Likewise, The Washington Post reported on April 24: "Consumers have reacted to this bill in the same way their advocates have: They're dead-set against it."

We urge you to stand up against this anti-consumer move by the airlines and to ask House leadership not to schedule this highly controversial bill for the Suspension Calendar, and instead insist on a fair opportunity for travel industry and consumer groups' input and proper deliberation.

Sincerely,

AirlinePassengers.org

Association for Airline Passenger Rights

Business Travel Coalition

Consumers Union

Ed Perkins, Consumer Advocate

FlyersRights.org

National Consumers League

Travelers United

U.S. PIRG

NOTE: At <http://btc.travel> find relevant foundational documents, analyses and industry statements representing all views on H.R. 4156 as well as press editorials and stories.

©2001 to 2014 Business Travel Coalition, Inc.