

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3679

To direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation administration to develop an interagency task force to develop and implement a strategy to identify and advance research on communicable diseases in air travel, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 25, 2023

Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK (for herself, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mrs. CHAVEZ-DeREMER, Mr. BACON, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CARSON, and Ms. TITUS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

A BILL

To direct the Administrator of the Federal Aviation administration to develop an interagency task force to develop and implement a strategy to identify and advance research on communicable diseases in air travel, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Healthy Air Travel
5 Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE ON COMMUNICABLE**
2 **DISEASES IN AIR TRAVEL.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
4 date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator of the
5 Federal Aviation Administration, in coordination with the
6 Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Sec-
7 retary of Homeland Security, shall establish an inter-
8 agency task force to develop and implement a strategy to
9 identify and advance research on communicable diseases
10 in air travel.

11 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—The Administrator of the Fed-
12 eral Aviation Administration, in coordination with the Sec-
13 retary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary
14 of Homeland Security, shall select members of the task
15 force established pursuant to subsection (a) from the Fed-
16 eral Aviation Administration, the Department of Home-
17 land Security, and the Department of Health and Human
18 Services and such other Federal departments or agencies
19 as the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administra-
20 tion considers appropriate.

21 (c) CONSULTATION.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—When developing a strategy
23 under subsection (a), the task force established pur-
24 suant to such subsection shall consult with aviation
25 industry, health experts, and labor stakeholders, in-
26 cluding representatives of—

1 (A) air carriers, which shall include domes-
2 tic air carriers consisting of major air carriers,
3 low-cost carriers, regional air carriers and cargo
4 carriers;

5 (B) airport operators, including with re-
6 spect to large hub, medium hub, small hub, and
7 nonhub commercial service airports;

8 (C) labor organizations that represent air-
9 line pilots, flight attendants, air carrier airport
10 customer service representatives, and air carrier
11 maintenance, repair, and overhaul workers;

12 (D) the labor organization certified under
13 section 7111 of title 5, United States Code, as
14 the exclusive bargaining representative of air
15 traffic controllers of the Federal Aviation Ad-
16 ministration;

17 (E) the labor organization certified under
18 such section as the exclusive bargaining rep-
19 resentative of airway transportation systems
20 specialists and aviation safety inspectors of the
21 Federal Aviation Administration;

22 (F) trade associations representing air car-
23 riers and airports;

24 (G) aircraft manufacturing companies;

1 (H) public health and infectious disease ex-
2 perts and researchers;

3 (I) scientists and engineers familiar with
4 air travel;

5 (J) general aviation; and

6 (K) such other stakeholders as the Admin-
7 istrator of the Federal Aviation Administration
8 considers appropriate.

9 (2) BALANCE OF INPUT.—The Administrator of
10 the Federal Aviation Administration shall ensure
11 input from stakeholders under paragraph (1) is bal-
12 anced between labor stakeholders and airline, air-
13 port, and manufacturer stakeholders.

14 (d) REQUIREMENTS ON AGENCIES.—The task force
15 established pursuant to subsection (a) shall—

16 (1) determine the resources needed by each de-
17 partment, agency, or administration of the Federal
18 Government;

19 (2) identify the responsibilities of each such de-
20 partment, agency, or administration; and

21 (3) catalog all interagency agreements related
22 to this section for Congress.

23 (e) CONTENTS OF STRATEGY.—The task force estab-
24 lished under subsection (a) shall develop a strategy that,
25 at a minimum—

1 (1) provides a holistic look at what is known
2 about communicable diseases in air transportation;

3 (2) identifies any areas of needed research;

4 (3) gives researchers access to relevant data, in-
5 cluding deidentified health data, and to the extent
6 practicable, gives researchers access to aircraft and
7 airports;

8 (4) incorporates, as appropriate, the consider-
9 ations made by the Comptroller General of the
10 United States to the Secretary of Transportation
11 contained in the report titled “Air Travel and Com-
12 municable Diseases: Federal Leadership Needed to
13 Advance Research”, issued in July 2022 (GAO–22–
14 104579);

15 (5) considers the latest peer-reviewed scientific
16 studies that address communicable disease with re-
17 spect to air transportation; and

18 (6) considers funding constraints.

19 (f) REPORT.—The task force established pursuant to
20 subsection (A) shall submit to the Committee on Trans-
21 portation and Infrastructure of the House of Representa-
22 tives and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and
23 Transportation of the Senate a report on the contents of
24 the strategy developed under subsection (d) and that iden-
25 tifies what authorities, if any, the task force considers are

1 needed by either the task force or the membership agen-
2 cies of the task force to help ensure implementation of
3 the strategy developed under subsection (d).

4 (g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

5 (1) AIR TRANSPORTATION.—The term “air
6 transportation” means the movement of passengers
7 and airline crew through airports, onto and off air-
8 craft, and in the aircraft cabin.

9 (2) COMMUNICABLE DISEASE.—The term “com-
10 municable disease” means a communicable disease
11 that has the potential to cause a future epidemic or
12 pandemic of infectious disease that would constitute
13 a public health emergency of international concern
14 as declared, after the date of enactment of this Act,
15 by the Secretary of Health and Human Services
16 under section 319 of the Public Health Service Act
17 (42 U.S.C. 247d).

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