

organizations—to present new evidence about the fair market value of a songwriter's works—like what the performer earns for their songs—to a Federal rate court judge when there is a dispute about royalty rates for songwriters.

The legislation allows ASCAP and BMI to have Federal judges in the Southern District of New York randomly assigned to hear their rate cases, rather than have all the proceedings occur before the same judge each time. This should lead to better outcomes for songwriters.

This change in the law made sense in the internet world. Today, in the world we live in, more than half of the revenues in the music business are for songs played over the internet. The internet has changed music just like it has changed everything else. This changes the law to put us into the internet age. It changes some laws that have been around for centuries, since the days of the player piano.

Since there are others who will be wanting to speak, I have had other chances to talk about the bill. I have said most of what I wanted to say, except for a couple of thank-yous.

First, ORRIN HATCH is exactly the right leader for this bill in the Senate for a variety of reasons. He is chairman of one important committee and nearly ranking on another. Through his prestige and his position in the Senate and through the respect we have for him, he was able to ask Senators to step back and allow us to do this very complex piece of legislation in a situation where any one Senator could have blocked it—and many did for a while, until they were persuaded not to.

I want to thank Chairman GRASSLEY and Senator FEINSTEIN for moving it through the Judiciary Committee expeditiously. This could not have happened if Senator McCONNELL and Senator SCHUMER had not created an environment in which we could do this. Senator HATCH mentioned Senator WHITEHOUSE and Senator COONS, who were among the lead Democratic cosponsors. We had 82 cosponsors of this bill. We only have 100 Senators, and we had 82 cosponsors of the bill.

I want to particularly thank Senator DURBIN, who may be a Democrat from Illinois, but he loves to go to Nashville and go to the Grand Ole Opry, and he jumped on early. He is the No. 2 Democrat, and he has been a big help.

DOUG COLLINS, HAKEEM JEFFRIES, and DARRELL ISSA in the House of Representatives were real leaders from the beginning, and, of course, BOB GOODLATTE and Ranking Member NADLER were as well.

I think it is important to join Senator HATCH in mentioning again those music groups whom we sat down with more than 2 years ago and said: Look, we have been here for a long time, and we could continue to argue about what you disagree on or we could try to pass what you can agree on. And for the last 2½ years, they have worked to com-

promise, to agree on what they could agree on, and they have done that in an important way.

I thank the Nashville Song Writers Association International—Bart Herbison especially, but a whole bunch of them, including the National Music Publishers Association, ASCAP, BMI, the Recording Academy, Sound Exchange, Digital Media Association, Song Writers of North America, Internet Association, Recording Industry Association of America, and the National Association of Broadcasters, which came with a strongly support recommendation in the end, which was a big, big help.

Senator HATCH was correct. The most valuable players in all of this most likely have been the staff members on both sides of the aisle and in both Houses who helped put the competing interests together—and there were many—in a way that produced this bill.

I would especially like to thank Lindsey Garcia, who is sitting here with me, and Paul McKernan, who worked on this for a long time, and David Cleary and Allison Martin on my staff.

Chris Bates, Matt Jensen, and Matt Sandgren on Senator HATCH's staff have been terrific and essential.

I thank Rita Lari from the Senate Judiciary staff. We were joking the other day. When we first talked to her about this, she said: Are you sure you can pass a bill like this? Most people didn't think it was possible to get all of the competing interests here to agree.

Congressman DOUG COLLINS and his staff have really been at the forefront of this, including Sally Rose Larson.

Republican floor staff Megan Mercer was a big help.

A special shout-out to Reema Dodin, who works for Senator DURBIN and who was a consistent help but was especially helpful on last Tuesday afternoon when we only had a little bit of time and we needed to get some last-minute changes cleared in the Democratic cloakroom as well as the Republican cloakroom.

This would be a good exercise for a chapter in a book on legislation sometime. But it is going to be the Hatch-Goodlatte Music Modernization Act, and the result is going to be that thousands and thousands of songwriters in this country for the first time in a long time are, A, going to get paid for their work, and, B, they are going to get paid more of a fair market value, as they should.

I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to have worked on it, and I thank all of my colleagues for working so well with Senator HATCH and me to get it done.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

REMEMBERING JOHN ABRAMS

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Mr. President, I am here today to honor the life of GEN John Abrams—a father, a husband, a friend, a soldier, and to so many, a

hero. He passed away last month at the age of 71 after spending more than half of his life in the U.S. Army.

Rising from the son of a general to become himself a four-star general, John Abrams embodied the spirit of selflessness and of sacrifice for which our military is known. He spent his life fighting to defend the freedoms that we all too often take for granted. He was wounded in battle, returned to duty, and then wounded again, but he refused to let any injury deter him. He was a soldier's soldier from the very start, and those who knew him were made better by being in his orbit.

He served in the Armed Forces for 36 years, first enlisting in 1966 before becoming commissioned as an officer just 1 year later. He made it to four stars the hard way: by starting as a private—the lowest rank.

Soon after he was commissioned, he deployed to Vietnam, where he served two consecutive tours and volunteered for a third before being sent home. Then, he was off to a Korean province just north of Seoul. After that, he went to Germany for five tours, serving in Hungary, Bosnia, and Kuwait as well—all this in service to his country, all in an effort to add to the greater good.

He made history, becoming just the second American ever to command the same unit as his father when he was promoted to lieutenant general and tasked with commanding the V Corps in Germany—yes, that V Corps, the same unit that stormed the shores near Normandy and fought at Omaha Beach, that liberated Paris and took on the German troops during the Battle of the Bulge.

His own heroism in Vietnam did not go unnoticed. He was decorated with a Silver Star and a Purple Heart. But he would tell you that his greatest decoration was that of being a father, a husband, and a leader of soldiers.

He went on to lead the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, overseeing the Army's training in its entirety. He continued to rise in the ranks alongside his own brothers, one of whom just testified in front of the Senate today and is set to be confirmed as the next commander of U.S. Forces Korea.

Looking back, it is little wonder where General Abrams' strength of character came from. His father served as the Army Chief of Staff, commanding all forces across Vietnam from 1968 through 1972. His mother founded the Army's chapter of the Arlington Ladies around that same time, organizing volunteers to attend funerals to make sure that no troop was ever buried alone. He combined his father's courage with his mother's compassion, and in the process, he made this Nation a better, safer place for the rest of us—for his children and their children and my children.

He couldn't have done any of this without the loving support and service of his family, his wife Cecelia and his two daughters. As the quintessential

military family, they served alongside of him. To each of them, I express my gratitude and that of this grateful Nation.

My thoughts are with all of General Abrams' loved ones today, along with my deep gratitude. Thank you for sharing your father, your husband, your brother with the rest of this country that he served so valiantly for so long. God bless him and his legacy. God bless the troops he cared so deeply about and led so ably. God bless the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

#### FAA REAUTHORIZATION

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I rise today to express my frustration—my outrage—that this body is poised to miss a historic, once-in-a-generation opportunity to stop the major airlines from gouging Americans with exorbitant fees every time they fly.

In the dark of night early Saturday morning, House and Senate committee leadership released a Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bill that does not include a commonsense, bipartisan provision to protect passengers from having to pay \$200 to change a ticket that costs \$250—a provision that would have protected a family from paying \$200 to cancel a flight because another family member had fallen seriously ill and a vacation had to be canceled.

Instead, after months of lobbying against my bipartisan FAIR Fees provision, the airlines won and airline passengers lost. I would compare it to the Christians and the lions, but in this story, the Christians even had to pay extra to enter the amphitheater.

What once were considered the basic services of flying have now become optional and with a massive price tag—checking a bag, carrying on a bag, flying standby for an earlier flight, printing a boarding pass, early boarding, seat selection, changing or canceling your flight, even a blanket and pillow.

Air travelers are being nicked-and-dimed, but the real cost is in the billions of dollars. That is because the major airlines have turned fees into a multibillion-dollar industry. Last year, the airlines raked in \$7.4 billion in fees. More than \$4.5 billion came from now having to pay to check your bag, and \$2.9 billion was extra fees if you wanted to change your ticket or if you wanted to cancel your ticket. That is billions of dollars. That is actually the equivalent of 11 million flights from Washington, DC, to Boston. That is the cost that is now imposed upon consumers. Passengers think they are buying low-cost fares, but they are really just victims of airline greed in support of a new multibillion-dollar profit center.

Even in the past few weeks, as we worked in Congress to include important consumer protection measures in this final FAA legislation, the airlines continued to raise their fees.

Last month, JetBlue Airways raised its change and cancellation fees from

\$150 to \$200 for certain flights. They also raised fees for a passenger's first checked bag from \$25 to \$30 and increased the fees for a second checked bag from \$35 to \$40. That is \$140 to check two bags for a round trip. Shortly after, United Airlines, Delta Airlines, and American Airlines followed suit, raising their bag fees to match JetBlue's.

In college, I might have spent more time being interested in politics than economics, but I thought competition was supposed to drive prices down and not up. So why are the airlines charging these fees? Well, the first answer is, because they can, but the real answer is, because there is no competition among domestic airlines.

In the past 10 years, we have gone from 10 major airlines down to just 4. Only four airlines control 85 percent of traffic in the skies. The only thing competitive about the current airline industry is the fight for overhead compartment space. Americans have more choice in where to eat at the airport than which airline they can take.

We know that when choice goes down, fees go up. And these sky-high fees bear almost no resemblance to the cost of the services being provided. The Government Accountability Office, GAO, recently released a report confirming what countless passengers across the country already know to be true: Airlines are gouging captive passengers to line their pockets, not to cover the actual cost of the services provided.

Does it really cost \$200 for American Airlines to change a ticket? Does it really cost Delta Air Lines \$40 to load that second bag—\$10 more than processing the first bag? Airlines are increasing their fees in order to match their competitors. They are actively seeking to deceive passengers by offering artificially low fares and then charging exorbitant fees on the back end.

Enough is enough. It is time we put a stop to these abusive practices. That is why Republican Senator ROGER WICKER of Mississippi and I joined together to get our provision ensuring change and cancellation fees are reasonable into the Senate FAA reauthorization bill.

When a liberal from New England and a Republican from the Deep South can agree on policy, we are on the right side of history. Yet the airline industry had other plans. They stated their No. 1 priority in the FAA reauthorization was defeating our FAIR Fees provision.

What is it about this provision that they would stop at nothing to block it from becoming law? Why would the airline industries band together on this one issue? They don't compete truly against each other in the marketplace. Here, they could all come together on one policy. It is because they don't want the Department of Transportation to assess whether change and cancellation, baggage, and other fees are reasonable and proportional to the costs of the services provided. They

don't want to ensure change and cancellation fees are reasonable. That is all that our provision does—ensure that these fees are reasonable and proportional to the cost of the services being provided by the airlines to the customer. That is it. It is as commonsense and as straightforward as you would want an airline passenger to receive from their airline—fair and reasonable.

No price is determined by this amendment—only that it has to be fair and reasonable and related to the cost that is, in fact, borne by the airlines in order to provide that service. How onerous could that be on an airline? Why can't we get that passed through this body so that consumers don't get tipped upside down at the counter as they try to change a ticket or to cancel a ticket? Why can't we get that passed?

If a child gets sick and a passenger has to change or cancel a flight weeks in advance, does it really cost Delta Air Lines \$200 to cancel that ticket? If a meeting gets postponed so a ticket has to be canceled 2 weeks before departure, is it fair for United Airlines to charge \$200 for a ticket that costs about that same amount? Are those fees proportional when the airlines can still resell the vacated seat, even if the passenger cancels weeks ahead of time?

Think about that. The passenger gives the airline 2 weeks' notice. Then, they have to pay a fine, \$200. Then, the airline resells the ticket to another passenger. What is the cost to the airline in that kind of situation? Or are they just exploiting the vulnerability of the passenger who has to change it? They have resold the ticket for the same price or higher to another passenger.

The answer is no. Passengers have no choice. They have no alternative.

The market has failed, leaving these flyers vulnerable to fee gouging and corporate greed from the airlines. You are at the counter, and they can say: Go to another airline.

And you say: Well, there are no other airlines at this airport that fly to my destination. It is the only airline I can rely upon.

Well, then, pay the cancellation fee, pay the change fee because you are not at a marketplace where you can then say: There is another airline I can go to right here at this airport that will take me to that destination nonstop.

In fact, the only thing the airline industry was more committed to doing than raising airline fees was defeating the consumer protection provision in the FAA bill. We still have an opportunity to right this wrong. Tomorrow the House of Representatives will consider the FAA reauthorization bill. On behalf of the flying public—the millions of Americans who are subjected to ridiculous airline fees—I call on the House to add the FAIR Fees provision to the FAA reauthorization bill, and I call on my Senate colleagues to support it. It is time to stop nickel-and-dime American families and ensure