

## Protect U.S. Aviation Jobs

The bipartisan ***Fair and Open Skies Act (H.R. 3632)*** would help prevent foreign airlines from using “Flags of Convenience” to avoid the regulations of their home countries or otherwise undermining labor standards. This legislation would protect our jobs and a strong U.S. aviation industry.

A “flag of convenience” business model permits airlines to establish operations in countries with the lowest labor standards, the direct opposite of the stated purpose of these trade agreements. Under ‘flags of convenience,’ jobs are transferred to countries without labor rights and with the lowest pay and working conditions. It was this business model that effectively undermined the U.S. commercial shipping industry. The business practice precipitated the loss of tens of thousands of U.S. maritime jobs as companies flew the flag of countries with the weakest labor, regulations and tax laws. Safety was compromised.

H.R. 3632 ensures that air carriers operating within the US-EU Air Transport Agreement of 2007 comply with Article 17 *bis* protecting the statutory rights of workers against the threat of carriers shopping around for cheap labor. The bill also goes further to protect against flag of convenience airlines from operating into the U.S. from countries other than the European Union by allowing the Secretary of Transportation to reject a foreign air operating certificate to a flag of convenience carrier and ensuring that any applicant to the U.S. does not undermine labor standards.

Airline workers deserve enforcement of strong job protections in foreign trade agreements. We call on Congress to affirm that the labor protections are meaningful and not just a façade. Failure to do so will have catastrophic consequences for the aviation workers who work tirelessly every day ensuring that the flying public enjoys the safest aviation system in the world.