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April 8, 2016

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx,

I write today to express my concern over recent reports that several U.S. airlines have changed their ticket price disclosure practice for multi-city itineraries. According to these reports, certain airlines are only advertising their most expensive fare options for travelers trying to book multi-city trips, while travelers purchasing those same flights as individual segments are given a range of fare options. This practice can cost consumers hundreds of dollars in unnecessary costs at a time when air travel is already a substantial expense. I urge you to conduct an investigation of this procedure under the Department's authority to regulate against unfair and deceptive practices.

Consider the example of a traveler taking a multi-city trip, leaving Newark to visit a friend in Los Angeles, then traveling from Los Angeles to San Francisco to visit family before returning home. If this traveler were to book each leg of the trip individually, a recent airfare search found that the total cost would come to \$592. However, if this same trip on the same airline was booked as a multi-city trip in one purchase, the total is shown as \$1,311—more than double the cost. This sizeable difference is due to the airline's decision to only advertise pricier flexible fares for the multi-city purchase—tickets that are far more expensive than the standard, non-refundable tickets that are available when each leg of the trip is booked separately.

At a time when travelers have to deal with proliferating airline fees, shrinking airplane seats, and long lines at airports, the last thing they need is to worry that they might be spending hundreds of extra dollars on their airfare for no reason. The Department of Transportation has shown a strong commitment to airline consumer protection, and I urge you to consider building upon this work by investigating this new airline practice.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and I look forward to continuing to work with you on behalf of the flying public.

Sincerely,



Robert Menendez
United States Senator