

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on Docket No. FAA-2002-13378: Reports by Carriers on Incidents Involving Animals During Air Transport, 19 CFR Part 119.

I STRONGLY SUPPORT THE PROPOSED RULE.

I have reviewed the information provided on the proposed rule from the Federal Register. I feel, of course, that it is necessary to keep all of the public's comments in mind, not just those of a few. I have reviewed quite a few of the comments submitted in opposition to the proposed rule, and I must say I find some of them disheartening.

For example, many of the opponents to the proposed rule seem to think that the rule would be costly, involve much unnecessary bureaucratic red tape, and reduce their ability to transport animals via air. These comments are clearly misinformed and unwarranted. Your summary states,

"This proposal would result in no significant annual recordkeeping or reporting burden because the air carriers covered by the reporting requirements are currently required to submit similar reports to the Bureau of Transportation. In addition, only carriers that are actually involved in an animal incident will have to file a report."

How can simply reporting on loss/injury/death to animals in and of itself be disadvantageous to airlines? It seems to me that this reporting would only be disadvantageous to those airlines with the worst records of losing, injuring, or killing animals in transport.

Also, the proposed rule cannot simply be discounted because airlines may have to report on a wide array of animals if and when an incident does occur. Cats and dogs are not the only animals in the United States to be considered pets, although they are in fact very popular pets. Does a consumer who has a spider or an iguana for a pet deserve less than a consumer who has a cat for a pet? These consumers are all Americans, equally deserving to have their animal's well-being respected. Those who are breeders by occupation, who also respect animal welfare, should be fully invested in seeing that their animals are transported as safely as possible, with the least risk of injury. Airline reporting of injury & loss to animals has wide potential to positively impact breeders, who transport more animals than the average consumer, and therefore stand increased risk of an incident happening that affects them.

I feel that the proposed rule is beneficial, including benefits to the airline industry as a whole. Specifically reporting on loss/death/injury to animals gives those airlines who are working the hardest to ensure animal safety during transport recognition through their smaller number of reported incidences. One other consequence to the proposed rule is that those airlines who have not fared as well in terms of animal safety will now have greater incentive to address that issue, because they will now be held accountable in the public's eyes for what actually happens on their carriers. Whether an incident is reported should not be left up to the consumer.

It is obvious that providing an opportunity to the American people to choose which airline they would like to patronize, with regards to their animal safety record, will be the most important consequence to come out of the proposed rule. Airlines would not be required to lower or meet a specific maximum number of losses/injuries/deaths to animals; they would simply have to tell consumers the actual risks associated with transporting an animal on their airline. This is simply one more important tool that consumers can have at their disposal to make responsible choices. Consumers have a right to know; we have a right to make

educated decisions with our money. Which is especially important when it comes to the health and welfare of those animals entrusted in our care, when we in turn entrust them in the care of an airline for transport.

Allowing consumers critical information and therefore, choice, should never be thought of as too burdensome for government. Please enact the proposed rule.

Thank you.