

ROGER WICKER, MISSISSIPPI
ROY BLUNT, MISSOURI
TED CRUZ, TEXAS
DEB FISCHER, NEBRASKA
JERRY MORAN, KANSAS
DAN SULLIVAN, ALASKA
DEAN HELLER, NEVADA
JAMES INHOFE, OKLAHOMA
MIKE LEE, UTAH
RON JOHNSON, WISCONSIN
SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO, WEST VIRGINIA
CORY GARDNER, COLORADO
TODD YOUNG, INDIANA

BILL NELSON, FLORIDA
MARIA CANTWELL, WASHINGTON
AMY KLOBUCHAR, MINNESOTA
RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, CONNECTICUT
BRIAN SCHATZ, HAWAII
EDWARD MARKEY, MASSACHUSETTS
CORY BOOKER, NEW JERSEY
TOM UDALL, NEW MEXICO
GARY PETERS, MICHIGAN
TAMMY BALDWIN, WISCONSIN
TAMMY DUCKWORTH, ILLINOIS
MAGGIE HASSAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO, NEVADA

NICK ROSSI, STAFF DIRECTOR
KIM LIPSKY, DEMOCRATIC STAFF DIRECTOR

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
AND TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125

WEBSITE: <http://commerce.senate.gov>

April 11, 2017

Mr. Oscar Munoz
Chief Executive Officer
United Airlines, Inc.
233 South Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL 60606

Dear Mr. Munoz:

We are writing about the forcible removal of a passenger from United Express Flight 3411 from Chicago-O'Hare (ORD) to Louisville (SDF) on April 9, 2017.

The images and emerging accounts of this incident are very disturbing. The last thing a paying airline passenger should expect is a physical altercation with law enforcement personnel after boarding, especially one that could likely have been avoided. We recognize the importance of having passengers comply with lawful crew instructions, but it is hard to believe that some combination of better planning, training, communication, or additional incentives would not have mitigated this incident or avoided it altogether. To date, United Airlines' (UA) explanation of the incident has been unsatisfactory, and appears to underestimate the public anger about this incident. Accordingly, we request that you provide the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation with a full accounting of this incident, as well as respond to the following specific questions:

1. When did UA first become aware of the need to subject passengers to involuntary denied boarding or removal from this flight? Specifically, did UA decide to seat the four airline employees on "must travel" passes after the flight check-in deadline had passed? If so, why was UA unaware of the need to transport these employees earlier (i.e., before passengers were permitted to board)? Did an unanticipated change in crew scheduling or some unforeseen contingency require these airline personnel to travel on this aircraft even after it was fully boarded?
2. In light of the foreseeable dissatisfaction of passengers being removed from a flight that was already boarded in order to accommodate airline personnel, what other options, if any, were explored to get the airline personnel to their destination? For example, did UA explore options for these employees to travel to a nearby airport before removing passengers from this flight?

3. As compared to passengers who are denied boarding before enplanement, are there different policies or procedures in place to “bump” a passenger who has already been seated?
4. Does UA consider a case where employees or crew members involuntarily displace a ticketed passenger who has met the check-in deadline an “oversold” situation under UA’s contract of carriage?
5. How often are security or law enforcement personnel called upon to remove a passenger subjected to involuntary bumping after having been seated on an aircraft?
6. How was the need to remove passengers communicated to those on board the aircraft?
7. What specific incentives were offered for voluntary rebooking? Did UA increase those incentives on-board the aircraft when the passenger in question objected to removal in an attempt to diffuse the situation? Does UA limit the incentives that may be offered in these circumstances? If so, how?
8. What assurances, if any, were made to passengers subjected to involuntary denied boarding or removal from this aircraft regarding arrival at their intended destination? How were these assurances communicated? Did UA explore options for a same-day arrival at the intended destination on flights operated by other airlines? If not, why not?
9. What interline agreements does UA currently maintain with other airlines to deal with voluntary or involuntarily denied boarding situations? In the past calendar year (2016), how many times were these interline agreements used to provide alternate accommodations to either voluntarily or involuntarily displaced passengers?
10. In this instance, how did UA select the passengers who were ultimately subjected to involuntary denied boarding or removal? What are UA’s policies for selecting passengers for involuntary denied boarding or removal? How are these policies communicated to passengers?

Mr. Oscar Munoz
April 11, 2017
Page 3

Please provide your response as soon as possible, but by no later than April 20, 2017. Thank you for your cooperation and prompt attention to this matter.

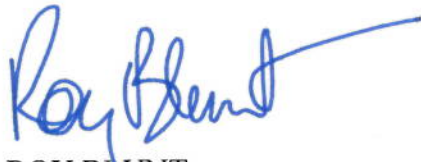
Sincerely,



JOHN THUNE
Chairman



BILL NELSON
Ranking Member



ROY BLUNT
Chairman,
Subcommittee on
Aviation Operations,
Safety, and Security



MARIA CANTWELL
Ranking Member,
Subcommittee on
Aviation Operations,
Safety, and Security