

Bob Dole



NEWS

U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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WRIGHT AMENDMENT

DOLE & KASSEBAUM ACCELERATE REPEAL EFFORT;
KANSAS SENATORS SHOW COLLEAGUES AMENDMENT'S
COST TO THEIR OWN CONSTITUENTS

WASHINGTON -- Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole & Senator Nancy Kassebaum (R-Kansas) are stepping up efforts to repeal the so-called Wright Amendment, the federally-imposed restriction on air service to Love Field in Dallas, Texas. The restriction results in sky-high air fares for Kansans -- and millions of Americans nationwide -- travelling to Dallas.

In an effort to build support for their Wright Amendment repeal effort, Senators Dole & Kassebaum have sent letters to 96 Senate colleagues detailing the Wright Amendment's inflationary effect on air fares for travellers from their states. The regulation, which restricts commercial airline flights using Love Field to locations within Texas and the four surrounding states, stifles competition with the larger Dallas-Fort Worth Airport (DFW) and results in higher air fares for travel to Dallas.

"No doubt about it, the Wright Amendment is the wrong way to treat the travelling public," Dole said. "It will take some time to educate our colleagues on this issue, but by showing them how their constituents who travel to Dallas are getting gouged, we will improve our chances of repealing this outdated restriction which costs Kansans low-cost air travel options."

The Wright Amendment, named for former House Speaker Jim Wright, was originally imposed in 1980 to protect the then fledgling DFW airport, now the second busiest airport in the nation.

From Kansas and 44 other states, air travellers who wish to fly to the more convenient, downtown Love Field must undergo a cumbersome "double ticketing" procedure, requiring passengers to make two separate reservations, purchase two separate tickets, and reclaim baggage and change planes in a state bordering on Texas before they can fly to Dallas.

Dallas is the number one destination of passengers flying from Wichita. However, air fares into Dallas from both Oklahoma City and Tulsa on a passenger mile basis are as much as 900% less than flights into Dallas from Wichita.

"The only reason for this huge difference is that the passengers in Oklahoma have competition -- they can use either Dallas-Fort Worth or Love Field," Dole said. "The bottom line is the Wright Amendment must go."

Dole plans to reintroduce Senate legislation to repeal the Wright amendment in the next few weeks.

In the letters, Dole and Kassebaum provided vivid examples of the Wright Amendment's impact, revealing that:

- ◆ roundtrip airfare between San Diego and DFW costs over 207% more than a comparable ticket between San Diego and Love Field;
- ◆ roundtrip airfare between Indianapolis and DFW costs 230% more than a comparable ticket between Indianapolis and Love Field;
- ◆ roundtrip travel from New York to the Dallas area can cost over 30 cents per mile, as opposed to travel from unrestricted states which typically costs 10 to 12 cents per mile;
- ◆ roundtrip travel from Nebraska to the Dallas area costs travellers over 27 cents per mile.

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