

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7741

To promote airline passenger safety during the COVID–19 public health emergency.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 23, 2020

Mr. CICILLINE (for himself, Mrs. BEATTY, and Mr. CARSON of Indiana) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

A BILL

To promote airline passenger safety during the COVID–19 public health emergency.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Maintaining Important
5 Distance During Lengthy Epidemics Act of 2020” or the
6 “MIDDLE Act of 2020”.

7 **SEC. 2. PROMOTING AIRLINE PASSENGER SAFETY DURING**
8 **THE COVID–19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), during
10 the period beginning on the date that is 14 days after the

1 date of the enactment of this Act and ending on the last
2 day of the emergency period described in section
3 1135(g)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
4 1320b–5(g)(1)(B)), an air carrier (as defined in section
5 40102 of title 49, United States Code) shall be prohibited
6 from doing any of the following:

7 (1) Permit adjacent seats to be filled on a pas-
8 senger aircraft.

9 (2) Pass along the cost of any seat switch un-
10 dertaken by an air carrier in order to comply the
11 prohibition under paragraph (1).

12 (3) Permit a passenger or crewmember to board
13 a passenger aircraft if the passenger or crewmember
14 is not wearing a mask.

15 (b) EXCEPTIONS.—Not later than 14 days after the
16 date of the enactment of this Act, taking into account the
17 provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C.
18 701 et seq.), the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
19 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), section 41705 of title 49,
20 United States Code (commonly referred to as the “Air
21 Carrier Access Act”), and any Federal health guidance
22 from the Department of Health and Human Services (in-
23 cluding guidance related to the COVID–19 public health
24 emergency), the Administrator of the Federal Aviation
25 Administration, in consultation with the Secretary of

1 Health and Human Services (acting through the Director
2 of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), shall
3 issue guidance that provides for appropriate exceptions to
4 the prohibitions under paragraphs (1) and (3) of sub-
5 section (a).

6 (c) NONDISCRIMINATION.—In carrying out the provi-
7 sions of this section, an air carrier may not discriminate
8 against any person on the basis of race, color, religion,
9 genetic information, national origin, age, disability, or sex
10 (including sexual orientation and gender identity, preg-
11 nancy, childbirth, and a medical condition related to preg-
12 nancy or childbirth).

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