



Rachel Blaney

Member of Parliament
North Island-Powell River

The Honourable Marc Garneau
Minister of Transportation
Via Email

Ottawa ON
June 1, 2020

RE: Airline Ticket Refunds

Dear Minister,

I am writing to you to express my concern that you are allowing Canadian airlines to refuse to refund the cost of purchased tickets. The decision to exempt cancellations due to COVID-19 and associated travel restrictions from the responsibilities under the Air Passenger Bill of Rights is deeply disappointing.

I fully understand that the airline industry is under extreme financial strain. In my riding of North Island – Powell River, not only do airlines employ a large number of people, but they also ensure that domestic and international visitors are able to arrive and support our vibrant tourism and hospitality industries, which make up a major portion of economies in smaller coastal communities.

However, it is completely unfair that individuals who happened to purchase travel tickets before the pandemic should shoulder the burden of financially supporting the airlines. These are people who in many cases are struggling financially due to COVID-19 themselves.

If the airlines need additional support, the federal government is the only body with the capacity and resources to provide that. This government needs to mandate that airlines refund all unused tickets to their customers and fill the gaps as needed.

My colleagues, NDP MPs Niki Ashton and Brian Masse, have already expressed to you what this has meant for ordinary Canadians at this difficult time. I have heard directly from constituents in my riding struggling financially because of this inaction on your part, and I know that MPs across this country are hearing the same.

Additionally, the 12-month credit many airlines are offering is of little help for people who feel uncomfortable about the risks or are at serious risk themselves from traveling again before a vaccine is widely available.

Many other jurisdictions around the world, whose airline industries are also struggling, have mandated that airlines offer a full refund for passengers unable to travel. I request that your government reconsider its approach on this issue and extend proper consumer protection to Canadians, as is their right.

I appreciate your attention on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rachel Blaney', written in a cursive style.

Rachel Blaney, Member of Parliament
North Island-Powell River

Ottawa

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